DISCUSSIONS ON ART

91/19

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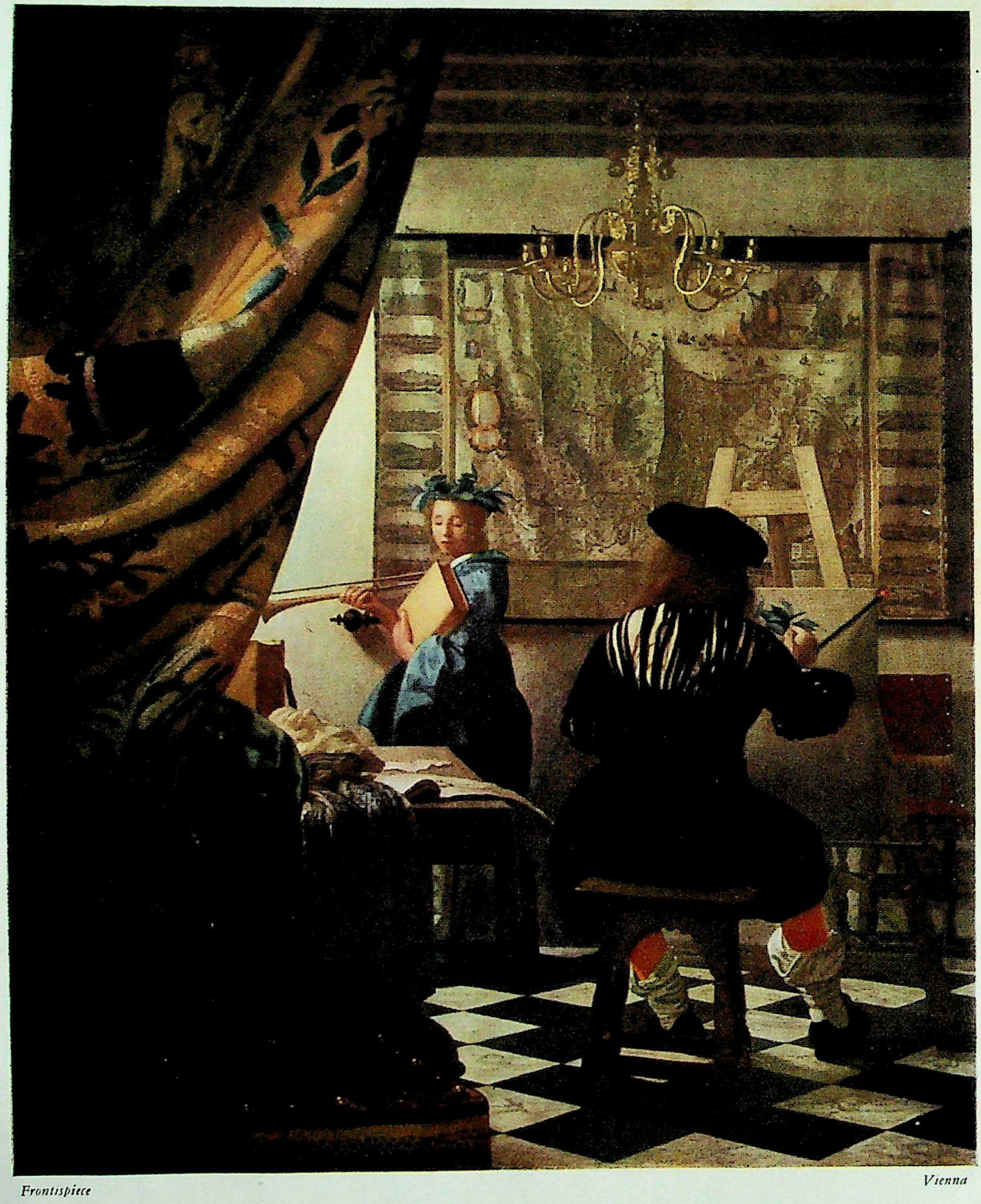

Frontispiece *Vienna*

THE ARTIST'S STUDIO *By Jan Vermeer* (1632-1675)

Original 52″ × 44″

DUTCH PAINTING

TEXT BY

J. B. MANSON

WITH 44 PLATES
IN COLOUR AND MONOCHROME

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CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	BACKGROUND AND TRANSITION	5
II.	THE GREAT PERIOD: REMBRANDT, HALS, VERMEER	8
III.	PORTRAITS	13
IV.	GENRE AND STILL-LIFE	16
V.	LANDSCAPE, ARCHITECTURE AND MARINE	22
VI.	DECLINE AND RECOVERY	27
	CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF PAINTERS	30
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	31
	LIST OF PLATES	32

NOTE ON NATIONALITY

There has been, in this series of Discussions on Art, one general principle for the problems of alternative nationality: that the painter concerned should have his place in the volume on the national School of Painting to which he devoted the bulk of his working lifetime. Thus, the French volume includes some artists born in England or elsewhere who not only belonged to the ubiquitous School of Paris, but lived most of their lives in France ; and the British volume includes American expatriates who made the greater part of their artistic careers in England.

The authors of the text, however, have been given full freedom to discuss or (where space permits) illustrate any painter whom they claim as part of their subject. There has been some inevitable overlapping at the point where art transcends nationality, with the result that a few famous painters are in more than one of the volumes.

DUTCH PAINTING

I. BACKGROUND AND TRANSITION

"LITERATURE," said M. de Bonald, "is the expression of society." With equal truth he might have said that art is the expression of a nation. It would be particularly true of the Dutch people. Their robust solidity; their preference for the substance rather than the shadow; their absence of spiritual speculation; their reliability and piety; their contentment with the well-ordered state of things—all are expressed in their art. They are happy in themselves and do not submit easily to the influence of others. Lacking in inventiveness, they have, so unlike the French, originated no new movements, suffered no revolutions in art. They are eminently traditional; though it is true, I believe, that they were the first to treat maritime painting seriously. They also devised those curiously hard, decorative flower-paintings, which, admirably performed, are still sought by collectors.

Fond of roistering and merry-making, occasionally of debauchery, they have produced many masterpieces which splendidly illustrate these aspects of their character. Such works are especially Dutch, and are not found with the same free intensity of expression in any other national school of painting. Above all, their work is stamped with the hall-mark of sincerity. If they display no Gallic lightheartedness, no desire *épater le bourgeois*, they escape from the humbug which is so often its concomitant. It may be that the nation itself consists mainly of the *bourgeoisie*.

The climate of a country also plays its part—inevitably and subconsciously—in moulding the essential characteristics of a nation's art. The variable weather, the constant change of scene, the all-pervading influence of the sea, the many storms, the infinite variety of sky effects, with the consequent enhancing of the play of light and shade and the subtlety of colour, have helped to develop both the character of the Dutch people and the art which is its expression.

Dutch art from the sixteenth century has maintained a consistently high level of excellence strictly within its limitations, with the great Rembrandt an outstanding and transcendent figure. But there are moments when it is difficult to say whether the works of some of the master-painters are really works of art or just examples of perfect craftsmanship. Art is essentially the expression of *emotion*, and the Dutch are not a particularly emotional people. Naturally they express the emotions which are common to all mankind, but in their art they are not dominated, or indeed greatly influenced, by them. There have been notable exceptions when the people have been moved by a collective national emotion and have risen against tyranny, but these belong to the world of history and politics rather than that of art. Of course, such things have their influence on art: social revolutions and wars have changed, permanently or for the moment, the course and character of art. But their influence in Holland was much less marked than, for example, in France. At one time a section of the Dutch artists evinced a passion for the painting of war pictures, admirably exemplified in the work of Wouwerman (1619–1668), strange in so peace-loving a people.

Another curious fact in the history of Dutch art is the way in which whole families have devoted themselves to the practice of painting. This persisted through the centuries, so that at times it seemed to be the rule rather than the exception. It may possibly be accounted for by the fact that painting was regarded as a craft, or even a trade, rather than in the more special sense an art. Fathers would instruct their sons at an early age, and the latter appear to have had sufficient talent to enable them to have quite considerable careers as artists. There were always plenty of teachers, as most of the artists were ready to practise that arduous profession. True, this resulted in the production of a number of mediocre pictures. It is significant that, in the study of Dutch art as a whole, the genuine artists stand out from the rank and file as very notable figures. There would be no doubt in which class to put Rembrandt, Frans Hals, Vermeer, Jan Steen, Ostade, Van Goyen, Ruisdael, Pieter de Hooch, and so on; but one might sometimes be puzzled by such artists as Paul Potter, Berchem, Van der Heyden and a host of others—so it must be concluded that much of Dutch painting falls short of the highest art. On the other hand, no nation maintained more consistently so high a level of excellence in painting. Moreover, it was their own and did not result from the impinging of alien schools of practice.

The Dutch, like other people, had the defects of their virtues. If they were, perhaps, too easily content, lacking inspiration if not aspiration, they produced a sufficient number of great artists of universal importance to give Dutch art a high place in the art history of the world.

With their somewhat materialistic point of view, they were interested in things—in objects as such, not as the means of exploring abstract qualities such as subtle harmonies of colour or new expressions of form (here, Rembrandt was the great exception). They could never have invented Impressionism (in the special French sense) or been guilty of the diverting follies of Italian Futurism. Nevertheless, they did find beauty in their surroundings, in everyday life, and revealed this beauty to their fellow-men—the first duty of an artist. If they were never witty and seldom light-hearted, they had solid worth; even their scenes of revelry have a certain conscientious sobriety of treatment.

Dutch art, too, had its influence on painters of other schools. Hobbema (1638–1709), Wynants (*c.* 1625–1682) and others had a great deal to do with the development of some of our great landscape painters, such as Crome, Constable and Gainsborough. It would not be rash to say that Hogarth was influenced by some of the Dutch painters of conversation pieces, a branch of art in which they excelled.

This brief study of Dutch Painting begins after the Gothic period. In that period there was a sort of universal language in art, due to a variety of causes, and Dutch paintings at the time differed little from Flemish work of the same date. The period in the Low Countries included some masters of supreme interest and importance. The originators of the school were the brothers Hubert and Jan van Eyck (1385?–1441). They, more particularly the latter, rank among the world's great painters. The picture in the National Gallery, the portraits of *Jan Arnolfini and Jeanne de Chenany his Wife* (dated 1434), is a marvel of craftsmanship. How Jan van Eyck contrived to acquire such mastery of the new art of oil-painting in a comparatively short life, much of which was spent in travel, is a mystery. Other masters of the period include Geertgen tot Sint Jans (*c.* 1465–*c.* 1495), whose attractive little picture of *The Nativity* may be seen in the National Gallery; Dirk Bouts (*c.* 1410–1475), a follower of the Van Eycks; Lucas van Leyden (1494–1533), and others of almost equal importance.

The period of Gothic art in Holland, dominated by the Church and the ruling Royal House, came to an end. Most of its productions were religious pictures, but some notable portraits had been painted, such as

Lucas van Leyden's *Philip of Burgundy* at Amsterdam. After the Gothic period there came a time of transition. At first the painters still wandered abroad, mostly to Rome, to the detriment of their own art. Soon they began to settle down, and the real Dutch character started to develop.

The transition was the result of many causes, some of them extraneous to art itself. The study of the period is interesting as showing how the art of a country can be moulded by political events and other outside movements. The spirit of the Italian Renaissance had been moving north. It was some time before its effects were felt in the comparative remoteness of Holland. The campaigns of Francis I in Lombardy had brought about a change in French taste. Many artists, among them Andrea del Sarto, had left Italy under French Royal patronage, and were establishing themselves at Lyons, Fontainebleau and Paris. They introduced new ideas in painting, sculpture and architecture. The movement had spread to Germany, mainly through the influence of the House of Austria and the somewhat extensive importation of Italian works of art, but partly, no doubt, as a result of Albrecht Dürer's visit to Italy as a young man. Holland, being outside the Austrian influence, was long preserved from this artistic invasion. The Dutch people had already begun to resist the authority of the Pope in their gradual renunciation of the religion of Rome.

One of the most active figures in the establishment of the revolution in art and thought was Jan van Scorel (1495–1562), whose work was anything but Dutch in character. He was a great traveller. As a young man he had wandered from Haarlem to Utrecht and on to Nüremburg, where he visited Dürer, and thence to Venice and the Holy Land. He visited Rome, where he painted a portrait of the Pope and worked for Raphael and Michelangelo, finally returning to Utrecht. There, he opened a school and introduced a somewhat bastard form of Italian art to the Netherlands. His masterpiece *The Death of the Virgin*, at Bruges, shows the eclectic nature of his art.

Quite a host of painters in the Low Countries, Dutch and Flemish, including Heemskerck, Goltsius, and Cornelius van Haarlem, followed in his steps, magnifying his faults and practising the methods which he had been the first to introduce. These painters are of little importance in the history of Dutch art. But if Martin Heemskerck (1498–1574), who visited Rome and painted many copies of Michelangelo, produced little except mediocre pictures, one good painter emerged from the studio of Van Scorel. This was Antonis Mor or Antonio Moro (*c.* 1519–1576). In spite of his travels in Rome, Genoa and Madrid, where he became Court Painter to the House of Hapsburg, he retained a certain independence of character in his art. He came to England to paint the portrait of Queen Mary which is now in the Prado. A good example of his work is the *Portrait of a Man* in the National Gallery, while his *Portrait of Jan van Scorel*, at the Society of Antiquaries, London, has special interest. His portraits give him a place in the front rank among the painters of his time, but his attempts at historical pictures reveal all the errors of the School of Scorel.

Hubert Goltsius was a man of learning, a printer, a historian and only incidentally a painter; but his cousin Hendrick (1558–1617) made the name of Goltsius famous in Dutch art. Even so, he is known by his engravings rather than by his paintings. He shows the taste and manners of his time by his admiration of Michelangelo. Architectural painting, at first somewhat cold and severe, represents a characteristic side of the art of the Low Countries. Hendrick van Steenwick (1550–1604), discussed in a later chapter, was one of the earliest to devote himself to this branch of art. Among the other painters of this period mention must be made of Hendrick Vroom, born in 1566, who painted the first sea pictures in Dutch art, and thus created a style in which later Dutch artists became very expert. Enthusiasm for the maritime glory of Holland was then at its height, and Vroom had a success which the artistic qualities of his work hardly deserve.

The classical painters of this period, Cornelis van Haarlem (1562–1638), Abraham Bloemaert (1564–1651) and the like, need mention only to illustrate the abortive effort to graft Italianised art on the Dutch. But Pieter Lastman (1583–1633) has a certain fame, due to the fact that he had the good fortune to be the master of Rembrandt. He came under the influence of Elsheimer in Rome, but his work, particularly his religious paintings, such as *Repose during the Flight into Egypt*, shows the uninspired heaviness which he owed to the teaching of Cornelis van Haarlem.

Before leaving this period, which is of importance in that it produced the reaction out of which grew the genuine Dutch School of Painting, we must give a parting glance to Gerard Honthorst † (1590–1656), the last of the Dutch-Italians. Honthorst went beyond the Alps for inspiration, but not to Raphael or Michelangelo. Decadence had set in. Whether his violent contrasts of light and shade were ever seen by Rembrandt or aroused the master to a study of such effects we do not know. In any case, Honthorst fittingly ends the attempt to give the Dutch Renaissance an Italian character.

II. THE GREAT PERIOD: REMBRANDT, HALS, VERMEER

THE period of uncertainty, unrest and classical fertility had passed. There were no clean-cut limits; one thing merged in another. The flower of Italian art had withered in the hands of the Dutch imitators; the attempt to sow alien seeds in the Northern soil had resulted in a crop of strange weeds. Among them we had notice of the sturdier native growth. Steenwick of the Churches and Vroom of the Sea were purely Dutch in their immature way. They established a line which proved to be fruitful and capable of development.

When Gerard Honthorst, the last of the Italian imitators, was born in 1590, Frans Hals, a brilliant artist of a somewhat different calibre, was already eleven or twelve years old; there is some uncertainty about the exact date of his birth. And Rembrandt appeared on the scene not very long after. The times were propitious for growth. The Spaniards had been finally expelled from the country. The spirit of independence was abroad. The dominating middle class, eager for knowledge, science and riches, was ready to welcome new things. It was a period of fruition, and the immediate flowering was of rare beauty.

The two great masters, Frans Hals and Rembrandt, so important yet so different, provide an interesting contrast: one the great painter, the other the great artist; one glorying in his power as such, the other subordinating his great gifts to the complete realisation of his vision, his impression. Between them there is something of the difference between prose and poetry.

It becomes almost inevitable here to consider briefly the quality and meaning of art. Art is essentially very simple, however complicated it may be made to appear by writers, experts and others who practise the mystification of the uninitiated. Fundamentally, art is the expression of emotion. That is not the whole story, but it is the basis of it. There can and has been much talk of dynamic centres, rhythm, significant form and so on. That is the familiar jargon of the expert, and is concerned with the means (the technique), and not the end. There have been many pictures which are admirably painted, but which express little or no

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† Plate 6

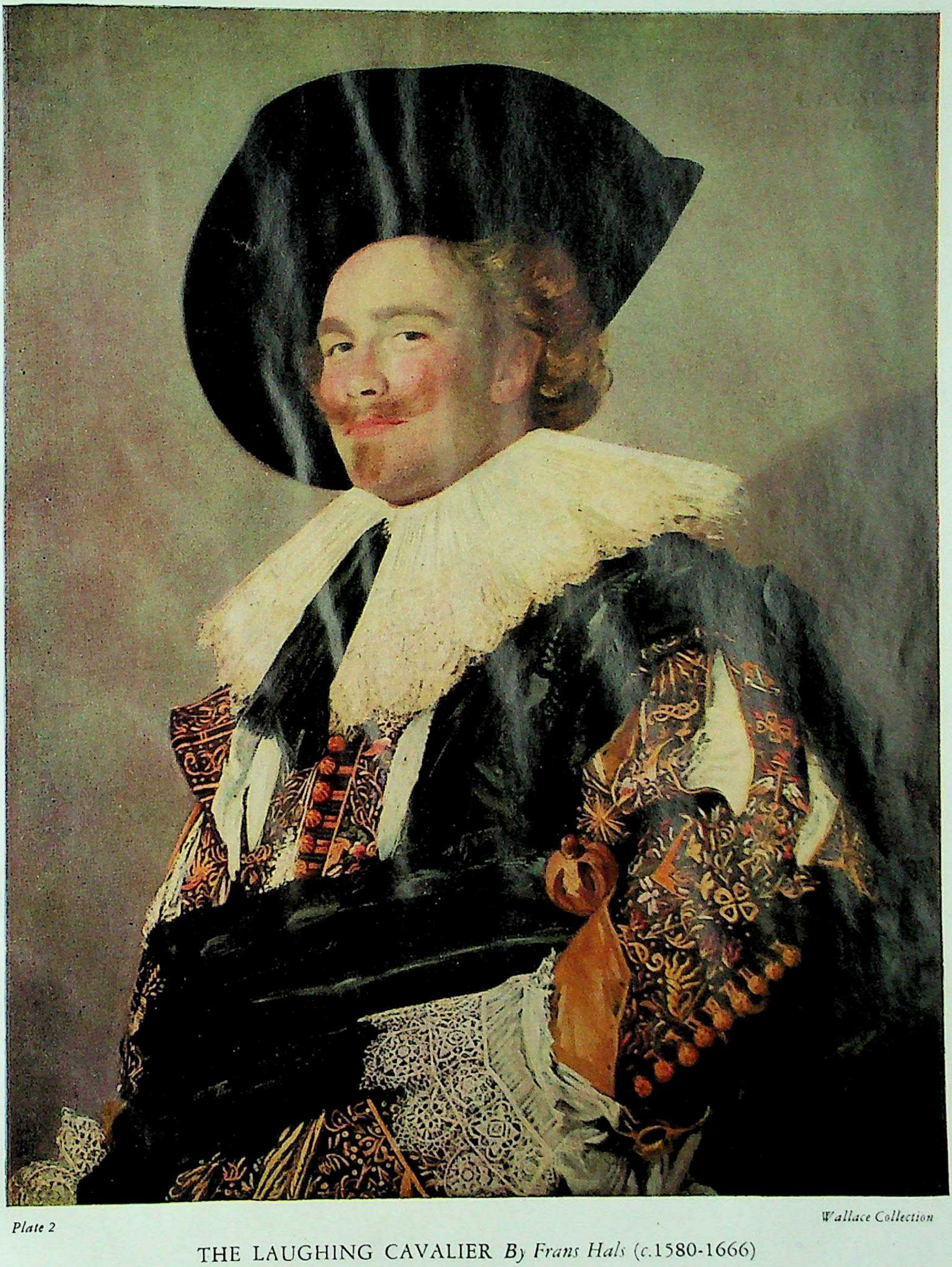

Plate 2

Wallace Collection

THE LAUGHING CAVALIER *By Frans Hals* (*c.*1580-1666)

Original 33″ × 26¼″

emotion. They are mostly as dead as mutton. They are exercises of the cleverness or learning of the painters. The emotion such as inspires the artist, but not the picture-maker, may be experienced by all mankind. No doubt the artist feels things more deeply, more keenly, and he has the power—the trained power—of expressing his feelings. That is the difference. In our day there has been abundance of the kind of art which needs not much talent or training. The first duty of the artist is to find beauty in everyday life and to express it in concrete form for the benefit of all mankind, so that others may see what he has seen and, to some extent, feel what he has felt. There are other branches of painting, such as decorative art, to which this may not so closely apply, but it is the basis of all.

Frans Hals † (*c.* 1580–1666), of the School of Haarlem, was not born in that picturesque little town which he ornaments so nobly (if one visits the almshouses, now Museum, where his pictures hang in splendid richness) but in Antwerp in the early 1580's. He came of a patrician family of Haarlem, and indeed there is something of that quality—which includes a certain disdain—in all his work. There is a certain aloofness in his portraits which gives them a distinction, while it imposes a limitation. In this he is vastly different from Rembrandt.

Curiously enough, Hals was not heard of in Haarlem much before 1611, although it is probable that he went there about 1591, when his younger brother Dirk was born in that town. His earliest paintings have not been recognised, though there is a *Portrait of a Youth*, in Berlin, which is supposed to have been done in 1611. This is strange, for it is unlikely that so richly endowed an artist should not have painted much, or at all, during the first thirty years of his life. In 1613 he certainly painted *Peter Scrivenius*, now lost, which belonged to the collection of Count Blondoff in Brussels as late as 1873. After that he led a busy life. In spite of the jollity portrayed in many of his pictures, he appears not to have been a very attractive person. His treatment of his wife, who died in 1616, leaves a discreditable record. He married again in the following year. His first *doelen* picture, *The Officers of the Archers of St. George*, at Haarlem, was painted in 1616. After it came many brilliant groups. That strange picture (owned by Viscount Boyne) belongs to the period 1634–1640. It contains nine figures, and is a *tour-de-force* rather than a great work of art. It displays his powers as well as his limitations. The individual portraits are painted with considerable verve and humour, but the crowded canvas makes a dim impression as a composition, and the flatness of the lighting is singularly uninteresting. It presented a very difficult problem, but one feels that a greater artist could have achieved a more rhythmic and artistically interesting arrangement. The master seems to have subordinated feeling and perception in order to give each head equal importance. Neither is *The Laughing Cavalier* of 1624 one of his best. It gave the painter an opportunity of displaying his remarkable skill, but it is somewhat flat and dry.

In 1637 Hals visited Amsterdam, where he came in contact with Rembrandt's influence, which had some effect on his later work. After 1645 his practice declined. His patrons, up to then, had been found among patricians, literary men, prosperous burghers and ecclesiastics; henceforth his sitters came from the obscure classes. Gone now were the lusty if superficial characterisation, the colour and glitter of careless life. With his difficulties and saddening experiences grew a deeper insight and penetration into character. But poverty and neglect fell on the old master; in 1652 his property was sold and he received assistance from the paupers' fund.

His paintings of the jovial side of life, such as *The Merry Lute Player* (Thompson Collection, Chicago), *The Jolly Toper* (Amsterdam), and his many sketches of children laughing, form the most attractive side of his work, and display his brilliant technique to perfection. Though he is not to be compared with Velazquez or Rembrandt as a portrait-painter, Hals stands high as a technician. He may be said to have invented the brilliant and direct method, which he brought to perfection.

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† Plates 8, 9, and Colour Plate 2

Hals rejoiced in his own power; his joy in life is contagious, but his great facility may, in the artistic sense, have been his undoing. He got lost in his own cleverness: the means and not the end dominated him, and so a great deal of his work remains superficial and unmoving. In this he presents a striking contrast to Rembrandt, the greatest artist of the Dutch School.

One of the most valuable gifts of an artist—and, perhaps, of any human being—is sympathy. And Rembrandt † (1606–1669) had this gift in abundance. It animates and warms all his work; it emanates from it. Sympathy involves intuition—though intuition is not necessarily sympathy. It enables the artist to enter into the life and spirit of—in a sense, to be—the thing he is painting. Consider one of his paintings of an old beggar man; he imbues it with loving sympathy. You not only know the old man, with all his hopes and fears, experience and sufferings; the man himself, while remaining intensely an individual, becomes part of the whole of humanity. It is this universality of feeling—incomparable and inimitable—that makes Rembrandt timeless and without nationality. He belongs to the Dutch School, it is true, but, above that, he belongs to humanity. His love of the thing itself, his simplicity of purpose, his colour, are Dutch qualities, but there was nothing merely national in his outlook. He had such depth of feeling that consciousness of his own cleverness, his own great gifts, had no place in the warmth of his emotion. They were subsidiary. He surrendered himself completely to the impelling necessity of his impressions. Many centuries later, Van Gogh was endowed (or in his own case, perhaps, cursed) with a comparable or even greater intensity of feeling.

Rembrandt had great technical gifts. He had no set, unvarying technique, such as enslaves the academies. His technique was his servant, not his master; he used it strictly as a means to an end, not as the end itself. And what a beautiful technique it was—so perfectly adapted to his purpose! How it developed and mellowed as the artist grew older! He is the best illustration of the truth of the dictum of Croce, the modern Italian philosopher, who holds that art is intuition, and that each intuition demands its own kind of technique for its full and individual expression.

Rembrandt's life, with its triumphs and worldly failures, its joys and its sorrows, makes a very human story. It would be interesting, if it were possible, to study the spiritual causes and conditions which result in the birth of a great artist. But there seems to be no accounting for the phenomenon. Our own great imaginative painter, Turner, was the son of a barber and a quite ordinary, if somewhat mentally afflicted, Devonshire woman.

Rembrandt Harmensz van Ryn, to give him his full title, was the son of a miller and a baker's daughter. To judge from their portraits, both were people of character. His father wanted him to be a scholar, and sent him at the age of fourteen to Leyden University. He left after a few months. For the next three years he studied under Swannenburgh of Leyden, but left him to work in Amsterdam under P. Lastman, one of the Italianised Dutchmen, who had a fondness for garish colour and painted familiar compositions in a formal and lifeless manner; he may be studied in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. The experience seems to have been uncongenial, as he stayed only six months with Lastman. It is probable that he next came in contact with Jacob Pynas, another Italianate, who practised dramatic effects of light and shade in a colourless manner. This is supposed to have influenced Rembrandt at least to the extent of indicating the artistic possibilities of such effects. What is known as the Leyden period lasted until 1631. Works of the period, which include *The Banker* (Berlin) and *St. Paul in Prison* (Stuttgart), were small and dark in tone, with carefully studied effects of artificial light and figures arranged in a somewhat conventional way. One of his earliest dated etchings, that of his mother (1628), belongs to this period. At this time he also painted portraits of himself, his father and mother. Among his costume subjects—and such always had a great attraction for him—were *Samson and Delilah* (1628, Berlin) and *The Supper at Emmaus* (1629, Paris). There was also *A Laughing Man* which recalls Carel Fabritius' later work.

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† Plates 12, 13, and Colour Plate 3

After his removal to Amsterdam in 1631, Rembrandt soon developed a good practice. Three years later he married Saskia van Uylenburch. Then followed a happy period of exuberant activity, in which he indulged his passion for finery and jewellery, sumptuous materials and colours. It was his time of worldly success. But his pictures, rich and free as they were, had not yet become instinctive; he was mastering the technical difficulties of his art.

His subject pictures of the period—mostly Biblical—like the *Christ before Pilate* (about 1633) in the National Gallery and *The Angel leaving Tobias* (1637) in the Louvre, are more carefully reasoned out. The question of subject pictures, which are illustrations in a sense, suggests a matter for discussion: when are illustrations works of art? In the hands of such a painter as Alma-Tadema they become highly skilful records of archæological accuracy—quite without life. Rembrandt cared nothing for such accuracy. In his paintings of Biblical subjects he contrived to paint the life around him. His High Priests and Pharisees were merely people he knew in everyday life. He arranged them to suit the subject, with dramatic effects of light and shade entirely his own.

Saskia died in 1642. Only one of his children survived, his son Titus, who appears in many of the master's pictures. But Rembrandt's popularity and prosperity were already on the wane. Strangely enough, one of the greatest of his paintings, *The Night Watch* (1642), completed his ruin. This famous masterpiece, properly entitled *Sortie of Banning Cocq*, gave great offence to many of those portrayed in it. Large group paintings of members of companies or guilds were very popular, but all the members appearing expected to be treated with equal importance, as in the pictures by Van der Helst. Rembrandt, disdaining their petty vanities, used them in the creation of a great work of art—one of the world's masterpieces. It was considered a failure, and aroused a good deal of enmity.

With money difficulties and social troubles growing he ceased to be a fashionable painter, and became a bankrupt in 1656. His relations with Hendrickje Stoffels, who looked after him and Titus with loving care until her death in 1664, led to further scandal. The difficulties of his life had, however, a beneficial effect on his work. From 1640 his art reveals still deeper communion with emotion and with the thoughts and feelings of humanity. There followed a number of paintings of the Bible story which gave him his unique position as its interpreter. His portraits became even more profound in their insight. His sympathy enabled him to enter, as it were, into the very minds of his sitters. This, the greatest phase of his art, may be well studied in many beautiful examples in the National Gallery. They were produced in the loneliness of his "splendid obscurity" amid occasional commissions, such as the grand *Jan Six* portrait at Amsterdam. He died on October 4th, 1669.

It is useful to follow Rembrandt's life in some detail. He may be said to have experienced life in all its intensity as deeply as is humanly possible, and the events and experiences of his life moulded his art more closely, more vitally, than is the case with most artists. Of him it is true that perfect beauty was attained through suffering.

Rembrandt had many pupils. The most notable are Gerbrandt van den Eeckhout, Ferdinand Bol, Govert Flinck, Adriaen Backer, the Konincks and Carel Fabritius, of whom the last named came nearest to him in quality. On the whole, they owe their brief fame rather to their association with him than to their own achievement.

From Rembrandt we turn to a master of a very different character. Jan Vermeer of Delft † (1632–1675) is one of the rarest painters of the Dutch School. He was much admired in his own day, but, strangely enough, his work did not attract modern collectors until after 1866, when a paper on him was published in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*. He was born in Delft when Rembrandt was twenty-six years old, and he is supposed to have studied under Carel Fabritius, a pupil of the great master, whose influence can be traced in *Diana and her Nymphs* (The Hague). During his brief life Vermeer had little worldly success; he married at twenty, and left his wife in poverty when he died. Yet his work expresses a calm and a serenity that are truly remarkable. His pictures represent the Dutch spirit at its best. He rejoiced in the quality of things for its own sake. Everything is arranged in perfect and restful harmony expressing complete contentment, although he must have been financially harassed throughout his life. In 1654 he had to raise a loan, but that did not lead to the permanent betterment of his condition. No doubt he was appreciated by his fellow artists, as he was often on the committee of the Guild of Painters at Delft, and was once its President.

Vermeer's sense of composition, though not perhaps adventurous, had its own beautiful perfection. Indeed, it is so faultless as to make it seem instinctive. If he had to reason it out carefully, he succeeded in disguising the fact. All his work has that feeling of inevitability which seems to distinguish great works of art—the feeling that it could not have been different. With all his apparent carefulness, he painted broadly, with freedom and solidity. It is partly that quality which in his few paintings of architecture and street scenes places him above Pieter de Hooch, delightful as the latter can be.

Vermeer's largish picture, *View of Delft* (The Hague), is remarkable for its breadth of view and handling. It is notable for its truth, naturalness and spaciousness. There is pleasure in the actual paint and painting, yet so true is it that, for a time, one can forget it is a painting. It is astonishingly modern in feeling and treatment. But he is at his most distinguished in his interiors with figures. One would like to compare, side by side, his homely picture of *The Cook* (Amsterdam) with a similar painting by Chardin. His characteristic touch, small spots of colour in the *impasto*, shows well in this picture. Vermeer had a lovely sense of colour, quite personal and distinctive. His love for cerulean blue and primrose is well known. If he used a simple scale, it was quite satisfying.

His first signed and dated picture is *The Proposal* of 1656 (Dresden), sometimes called *The Courtesans*. It contains four life-sized figures. Another large painting of the period, about 1654–1655, is *Christ in the House of Martha and Mary* (62½ in. × 55½ in.). This is probably better known to us than most, as it belongs to the National Gallery of Scotland. It is a comfortable composition with a feeling of homely intimacy. Although it is supposed to have been influenced by Italian painting of the early seventeenth century, it seems to express to perfection the purely Dutch attitude to religious subjects. Indeed, one cannot trace alien influence in any of Vermeer's work. He may have derived his marked interest in subtle—never exaggerated—effects of light and shade from Rembrandt through Fabritius, but his treatment and use of them were his own. They are an essential part of all his pictures. In some cases Vermeer's pictures have been confused with Pieter de Hooch's and those of Nicolas Maes. As proof of the neglect of his work—at a later date—it is curious to note that his signature on the picture *Diana and the Nymphs* had been changed by somebody to N. Maes, while the wonderful painting *The Artist's Studio* (Czernin Gallery, Vienna) bore the signature "P. de Hooch," though Vermeer's name was visible on the map on the wall.

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† Plates 34, 35, and Frontispiece

Vermeer was one of the great artists who gained and lost nothing by travel. He remained essentially himself; his work shows a sustained high standard to a remarkable degree. He died, as he had lived, in Delft, in December 1675.

III. PORTRAITS

UNLIKE the art of other countries, Dutch art cannot readily be divided into periods. It was not marked by startling changes or developments, but pursued an even course, maintaining a high standard of efficiency with a certain number of outstanding figures. It was essentially normal.

For the purpose of study, it is more convenient to divide it into the different classes of subject practised by the painters. The majority of the artists were specialists and stuck to their particular subjects without adventuring into other fields. Versatility was rare. This had its advantages as well as its weaknesses. The painter concentrating on a particular kind of subject attained a certain perfection, but it tended sometimes to mechanical treatment and a lack of that excited interest which lends what might be called inspiration to an artist. We find many cases of collaboration between painters; the landscape painters would employ a colleague to put in the figures. The same applies to painters of architecture and so on.

Some masters were less limited. Wouwerman † (1619–1668), who specialised in battle scenes, was also an excellent landscape-painter. He had to be, as most of his battles inevitably had landscape settings. He achieved a surprising variety in his numerous pictures.

Portrait-painting was a remarkably active and, no doubt, lucrative business in Holland during the seventeenth century. One of the most prolific painters in this branch of art was Michiel van Miereveld † (1567–1641), who, according to Sandrart, declared that he had produced nearly 10,000 portraits. Portraiture is a somewhat special branch of the art of painting; its appeal is too local or too often limited to those who were acquainted with the sitters. But it has an historical value as showing what the people of a certain period were like, what clothes they wore and so on. It is also indicative, to some small extent, of the character of a nation through the individual.

But a portrait *can* be a great work of art and have a universal and enduring appeal. Portraits by Rembrandt, Velazquez, Goya and many of the great Italians have an emotional appeal like other great works of art. On the other hand, they can be extremely tiresome and uninspiring. In this connection I am reminded of a letter written to me some forty years ago by J. S. Sargent. In it he remarks: "The mannerisms of portrait-painting are only tolerable in one who is a good *painter*; if he is only a good *portrait painter*, he is a nobody." Many of the Dutchmen were specialists who painted portraits and nothing else. Their work was solid, simple, straightforward; they painted their sitters as they saw them, adequately and truthfully. But rarely did they show very great psychological insight: fortunately, perhaps, for themselves,

† Plate 26

† Plate 7

though less fortunately for posterity, they were not concerned to go too deeply into such matters—always, of course, excepting Rembrandt. They may have been "too soon content"; they aimed at producing likenesses in a decorative manner, and they succeeded admirably within their limitations.

Artists who paint portraits among other things are aware of the strain of making portraits that shall be works of art as well as profound studies of personality. Such ambitions could not be entertained by an artist who painted 10,000 portraits in the course of his career. Unlike the great Italians, the Dutch did not romanticise their sitters; they created no poetic atmosphere. That would have been foreign to their national character. Their aim was honest realism as they saw it; a plain statement, in which something might be mitigated but nothing idealised. So we find a certain sameness, not only in the work of individual painters, but, more or less, in the whole school.

We have already considered the two greatest portrait-painters of the Dutch School: Rembrandt and Frans Hals, the former a poet who found a universal beauty in his humblest sitter, the latter exclusively a portrait-painter. We resume with Miereveld, who is typical of the whole school. He had his formula, so that when you have seen one of his portraits you have, in a sense, seen the whole 10,000. He had the characteristic Dutch love of painting rich costumes, pearls and other jewellery. He drew and painted the ruffs, so beloved by the ladies of the period, with great skill—no easy matter. His work is harmonious within a limited scale and his figures are well placed. Miereveld was born at Delft in 1567, and died there in 1641. He was a precocious child, and at the age of twelve he was sent to Utrecht to study under Antonio Blockland, known as Montfort. At first he painted still-life and interiors, but these were of small importance. He may be said to have firmly established the tradition of Dutch portrait-painting. His principal pupil, Paul Moreelse (1571–1638), carried on his master's work, but surpassed him in refinement and intensity of feeling.

After him came a number of painters who, while closely carrying on the tradition, showed individual characteristics without in any way diverting or disturbing the stream of art.

Thomas de Keyser (*c.* 1596–1667) brought some variety into the art. His work marks a departure from the rather flat convention of Miereveld: that of a single figure, more or less silhouetted against a dark background. De Keyser painted his sitters in their normal surroundings, at work or in conversation. Apart from that he had a livelier execution and a more robust sense of colour. A good example of his work is the portrait of *Constantin Huygens with his Clerk*, in the National Gallery. His contemporary, Jan van Ravesteyn (1580–1665), was probably the first to paint the *doelen* pictures which became so popular. They represented the meetings of the Civic Guards and the Regents. Such subjects, difficult as they were, lent themselves rather to the production of *tours-de-force* than to works of art.

Bartholomeus van der Helst † (1613–1670) devoted a good deal of his practice to the painting of such pictures, which sometimes included twenty or even thirty figures. They are remarkable achievements in their way, but in their execution the painter worked under great difficulties, as he was expected to treat all the figures in them as being of equal consequence. It was Rembrandt's refusal to respect this imposition, in his celebrated *The Night Watch*, that gave great offence and led to his financial downfall. Van der Helst's series of *doelen* pictures are rhetorical and lack pictorial unity. His chief picture, the great *doelen* piece *The Civic Guard*, painted in 1648, cannot, despite Reynolds' generous appreciation, rank with Frans Hals' famous Corporation pictures. He is seen to better advantage in his single portraits, of which two characteristic examples are in the National Gallery. Van der Helst turned out a vast amount of work, but nevertheless he died in poverty in Amsterdam in 1670.

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† Plate 21

An outstanding figure at this period was Carel Fabritius † (*c.* 1614–1654)—not that he painted many or important pictures, but because of the quality of his work. His association with his master Rembrandt developed in him an impressionist style of painting which was quite foreign to the Dutch temperament and unlike the work of his contemporaries. This is well seen in his *Self Portrait* in Rotterdam—a painting which calls to mind certain French work of the nineteenth century. It might, indeed, be the work of a member of the Barbizon School. It is purely a painting, and has nothing of the Dutch insistence on outline which makes some of their work, fundamentally, coloured drawing: that is to say, outline filled in with colour. He was killed by an explosion at Delft in 1654. Of all Rembrandt's many pupils, Fabritius came nearest to the master in style and feeling. His brother Barent, of whom little is known, may have been a fellow pupil; he developed a fondness for religious subjects.

Among the other pupils, Ferdinand Bol (1616–1680) and Govert Flinck (1615–1660) gained the highest reputations. Bol had considerable worldly success, and although some of his paintings and etchings have passed under the name of Rembrandt, his work was often mediocre, and in later life deteriorated in colour and chiaroscuro. His best work is a portrait of *The Six Governors of the Poor House* (1657) in Amsterdam.

Govert Flinck also abandoned the teaching of the master. His father, a laundryman, did his best to discourage the boy. But the intervention of a certain Lambert Jacobsz, an artist and a fervent Anabaptist, broke down his prejudices, and Govert was allowed to go to Leeuwarden, where he studied for a time with Abraham Lambertsz. With Jacob Backer (1608–1651) he proceeded to Amsterdam, where they entered Rembrandt's studio, about 1634. He had a certain success, obtaining many official commissions. It is said that during his lifetime some of his works were sold under Rembrandt's name, which may be surprising to us, considering those tiresome Biblical pictures of his, which display so little spontaneous feeling. Nevertheless, about 1647 he changed his style, adopting the more acceptable manner of Van der Helst, as may be seen in the portraits of the *Arquebusiers of the Orange Banner*.

Rembrandt had an astonishing number of pupils; many of them would be little known to-day but for their association with him. Others attained fame: among them, Gerbrandt van den Eeckhout (1621–1674), Philips Koninck (1619–1688), Samuel van Hoogstraaten (1627–1678), Nicolas Maes † (1632–1693), Aart de Gelder (1645–1727).

It would serve little purpose in this brief study to multiply names, but one must notice the charming work of Johannes Verspronck (1597–1662), who displayed a tenderness and delicacy somewhat rare in Dutch painting of the period. He had a fondness for silhouette effects, with the head turned towards the spectator. He was in no sense a revolutionary, but he struck a personal note and introduced a silvery tone into painting. All the Dutch painters were respectable and kept within academic limits; that is why a review of Dutch portraiture as a whole gives an impression of highly accomplished dullness.

Nicolas Maes made a name for the painting of small genre pictures which showed great delicacy and feeling. After 1655 he took to painting larger compositions, such as *The Card Players* in the National Gallery, and *Children in a Goat Carriage* (N. Rothschild Collection). These pictures show a warmth of colour and strong effects of light and shade. At that time he also painted portrait studies of old women which sometimes passed as the work of Rembrandt. But he soon returned to the smaller genre pictures which formed his personal contribution to Dutch art, though he still painted occasional portraits of distinction. Maes' work also showed a marked change after 1667, when he devoted the remaining years of his life to fashionable portraits, somewhat in the style of Van Dyck. At his best he displayed fine humanity, with an occasional touch of humour.

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† Plate 14

† Plates 28 *a* and 28 *b*

Gerbrandt van den Eeckhout proved himself a clever imitator of his master. His portraits, in which he revealed a shrewd appreciation of character and a distinct ability to paint hands, were better than his Biblical pictures. Other painters, like Aart de Gelder and Samuel van Hoogstraaten, painted similar pictures more or less in the manner of Rembrandt, while adding nothing new or important.

Cornelius Johnson (or Janssen van Ceulen) is sometimes numbered among the Dutch School, but actually he was born in London in 1593, and probably studied under Marc Ghaeraedts. His contemporary, Daniel Mytens (*c.* 1590–1642), though born at The Hague and a pupil of Miereveld, became Court Painter in England, where he practised between 1614 and 1635. He died at The Hague. His work is well known in England, but his careful and silvery painting adds little to the glory of Dutch art. We may conclude the study of Dutch portraiture with a reference to the De Bray family. They were three in number: Saloman, the father, Jacob, a portrait-painter of talent and the better-known Jan (*c.* 1626–1697). They were of the School of Haarlem. Jan's earlier pictures were of some importance, but in the 1680's the quality of his work declined so much that it is difficult to reconcile one with the other. His *Portrait of a Lady* in the National Gallery was sold as a Ravesteyn in 1891.

It may be noted that many of the portrait-painters produced historical and Biblical subjects. Reference may be made, in passing, to Cornelis van Poelenburgh (1586–1667). He was a traveller and a man of considerable reputation in his time. He was not primarily a portrait-painter, although he painted Rubens and himself and his wife in a landscape, and a portrait of Princess Amalia von Solms (1627). He preferred painting landscape with classical figures, which show the influence of his visits to Florence and Rome. He is said to have been in London in 1637, and Horace Walpole records a portrait group of his in which King Charles I and the Queen appeared.

IV. GENRE AND STILL-LIFE

PORTRAIT-PAINTING is a branch of art that has been practised at all times and in all countries, so that, although each nation stamped it with its own character, it cannot be said to be peculiarly characteristic of any nation. When we turn to genre-painting, it is another matter. Genre, a term used to describe painting of scenes and subjects of everyday life, includes interiors, conversation-pieces, tavern and rustic scenes and so on. Although genre-painting is not confined to Dutch people, they certainly excelled in it. Unaccustomed to flights of fancy and imagination, they found their closest interest in ordinary people and ordinary life. From the contemplation of Dutch portraiture one might get some limited idea of the character of national figures, their costumes and habits; from genre one gets an intimate introduction into the life of the people themselves, their work and play, their domestic affairs and their not infrequent merry-making.

Its greatest master, particularly of domestic scenes, is Pieter de Hooch † (1629–*c.* 1683). Little is known about his life. For a time he was a servant, and with his master, Justus de la Grange, he lived at Delft, Leyden and The Hague. It is certain he was a member of the Guild of Delft on various occasions. He is said to have been a fellow-student with Ochtervelt under N. Berchem, but he got most of his instruction from Carel Fabritius

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† Plates 32, 33, and Colour Plate 4

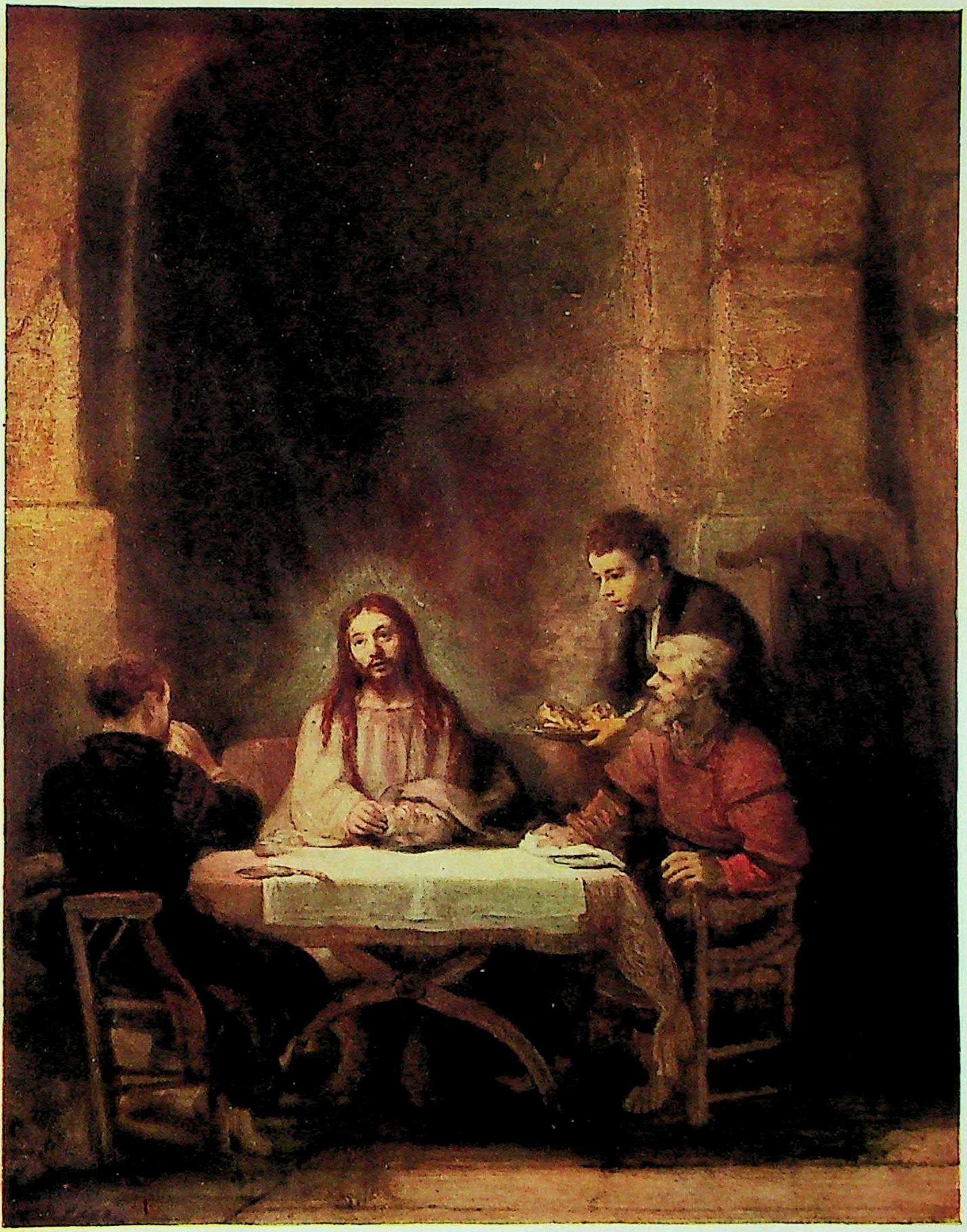

Plate 3 *Louvre*

THE SUPPER AT EMMAUS *By Rembrandt van Ryn* (1606-1669)

Original 27″ × 26″

at Delft before 1654. He was associated with Vermeer, who had a beneficial influence over him. He deteriorated in his later life, about 1667, becoming theatrical and conventional under the influence, it is supposed, of Raphael's *School of Athens*. It is a curious phenomenon, this deterioration in later life, which seems to have affected so many of these painters. It is not, in their case, a matter of old age, but of a complete change in style and mental outlook. It may be understandable with Rembrandt's pupils, who under the master's influence worked up to their best in emulation, and afterwards, as the influence grew fainter, relapsed into their own somewhat mediocre personalities. De Hooch, it is clear, did his best work under Vermeer's influence. One of his best pictures is *The Card Players*, in the Royal Collection. This bears a close resemblance, in composition reversed, to *The Merry Song* (National Gallery). In both we have a group of figures in one half of the picture balanced by a single figure in the other half. The light and shade, beautifully arranged, is similar in both, although *The Merry Song* is the stronger for the dark foreground which encloses it.

De Hooch was a very unequal painter even in his earlier and better period, and capable of producing weak and rather flimsy work. His curious little picture *The Golf Player* reveals a vein of humour which does not appear elsewhere in his work. His paintings of courtyards and street scenes are delightful in their simplicity and give authentic glimpses into the homely life of the time. They never fail to please.

Another excellent painter who may be conveniently considered with De Hooch, although he drew his subjects from a higher rank of society, is Gerard Ter Borch (as he usually signed his pictures) or Terburg† (1617–1681). He painted a number of portraits which have a certain naïve simplicity, but he is best known for his interiors with two or three figures. His life was interesting and varied. His wealth enabled him to travel, happily without detriment to his art, for all his work has a strongly personal flavour, and is not obviously influenced by his familiarity with the work of other schools. Indeed, he has been considered as the creator of a new style: the gracious and elegant style with which students are familiar. Be that as it may, there appears to be more vigour and originality of vision in Vermeer and De Hooch. His work shows academic art at its best. He was a pupil of his father Geert Ter Borch (1584–1662), a wealthy man who had travelled in Italy. The father's artistic talents were inherited by four of his children—he was married three times. From Amsterdam, Gerard, the famous son, wandered to Haarlem, where he became the pupil of Pieter Molyn the elder. He visited England in 1635, and then went through Germany into Italy, studying Titian in Venice and returning home through France. It is a tribute to his individuality that he remained so little influenced in his older work by the great Italian master.

At Amsterdam he studied the work of Rembrandt. In 1646 he visited Münster, where he painted the marvellous little picture (17½ in. × 22½ in.) of *The Peace of Münster*, in the National Gallery. This picture, which contains so many figures, is remarkably painted considering its size, and has his characteristic grey, silvery tone. Ter Borch himself appears in it, standing with one arm resting on a chair. His pictures, noted for their elegance, their silvery tone, and their appreciation of female beauty, maintained their excellence undiminished throughout his life. In his latter years he painted single figures of Dutch upper middle-class life, and a few penetrative portraits. It is useless to name a number of the titles of his pictures. *Curiosity*, in a New York collection, is one of the best examples. It shows his gracefulness to perfection and also his easy skill in painting materials, silk and satin and so on—the girl's figure on the left is particularly delightful. *The Letter* (Royal Collection) is equally pleasing and somewhat less academic in composition. Ter Borch's tender delicacy may have been so highly developed as the result of his study of the work of other nations.

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† Plates 16 and 17

A number of the painters of the period delighted in painting subjects of more commonplace life: homely interiors, marketing scenes and the like. Gerard Dou † (1613–1675) is probably the most popular of these; his minute treatment of detail appeals particularly to the uninitiated. He was born at Leyden, the son of a glass-painter who gave him his first lessons. After a short time with two other masters, he entered Rembrandt's school at the age of fifteen, and remained there for three years. This new influence is shown in such a picture as *The Dropsical Woman* (Louvre), but such grandiose conceptions did not reveal his real nature, which inclined towards simple everyday subjects such as *The Poulterer's Shop* (National Gallery). This picture, although only 23 inches by 18 inches, is larger than most of his work. It is characteristic of his highly finished work, and shows his fondness for painting still-life, especially fowls and other poultry. With all his minuteness of treatment, he maintained a transparency of colour. His touch is free and soft. His work was much sought after during his lifetime; a collector named Spiering paid him a thousand florins annually for the privilege of having first choice of his pictures.

We have considered Maes among the portrait-painters, although he is equally well or better known as a genre-painter. The work of another painter, contemporary with him, and whose work bears some relationship to his—at least in the choice of subjects—is Gabriel Metsu ‡ (1629–1667). He was a pupil of Gerard Dou, although he never acquired the minute style of his master. His life, unlike Ter Borch's, was uneventful; he never travelled, the only journey he ever took was from Leyden to Amsterdam, where he later established himself. He must have made an early reputation, for at the age of fifteen he was one of the painters petitioning to found a Guild of St. Luke. He became a foundation member in 1648. Jan Steen was one of his youthful friends, and it is possible that the traces of humour which may be found in his work were due to his association with that unique master. His pictures are never boisterous, as are Steen's, but they have a certain liveliness of expression. In his later life, which was not a long one, he used a more minute, finished treatment. His picture of *The Sick Child* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam) recalls, in its sympathetic feeling, the work of the great French master, Chardin. The little picture of *The Music Lesson* (National Gallery) is a characteristic example, and *The Letter-writer* in Sir Otto Beit's collection is a very amiable picture.

One of the fashionable Dutch painters, who is sometimes compared with Metsu, is Caspar Netscher (1639–1684), although he is undoubtedly inferior to him. He was born at Heidelberg in 1639, when the town was besieged, and his mother had considerable difficulty in escaping to Holland. In Arnhem he studied under Hendrik Costers, a tiresome painter of birds and dead game, and later he entered Ter Borch's studio. He had considerable success with his pictures and portraits of women, and enjoyed a position of artistically undeserved prominence.

This by no means exhausts the subject of domestic genre; the work of such painters as Quiryn van Brekelenkam (*c.* 1620–1668), Eglon van der Neer (*c.* 1635–1703), A. Palamedes (1601–1673) and others would repay study. But before passing on we must consider the paintings of Godfried Schalcken † (1643–1706), who introduced a new note by his studies of candlelight effects. He was a pupil, first, of Samuel van Hoogstraaten, and then of Gerard Dou. He spent some seven years in England, from 1692, where he painted many portraits, including that of William III. Time, through fading, has somewhat diminished the brilliance of his pictures.

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† Plate 11 ‡ Plate 31

† Plate 40

From these polite and elegant domestic scenes we turn to the branch of genre-painting in which the Dutch particularly excelled. Other painters of other nations have, occasionally, painted tavern scenes, village festivals and suchlike subjects, but in Holland they form a prominent and essential part of the national art, for they strongly express one side of the character of the people. The Belgians, who have their great Teniers, come nearest to them. In England we have the decorous paintings of Sir David Wilkie and the more racy Morland, but their absence would detract little from the British School. Not so with the Dutch; such paintings are among the most characteristic of the school, and some of the most gifted of their artists have devoted themselves almost exclusively to that side of the national life. And they painted such scenes with evident enjoyment.

The outstanding master of this genre was Jan Steen † (1626–1679), who was *par excellence* the painter of boisterous scenes of revelry. He was, appropriately enough, the son of a brewer. The remarkable irregularities of his work were, apparently, due to his habits of self-indulgence and extravagance, for they are to be found in every period of his work. He did not, however, confine himself to the tavern scenes in which he excelled, but he delighted in painting episodes of family life, usually in a humorous spirit. He also tried his hand at Biblical and historical subjects conceived in much the same way. But it was in the tavern that he was most at home and found greatest scope for his invention, humour and riotous spirit.

He studied first with Nicolas Knupfer at Utrecht and then with Jan van Goyen, the landscape-painter, whose daughter he married; but he found Adriaen van Ostade his most congenial master. For six years he leased a brewery at Delft, where he painted *The Burgomaster and his Daughter*. Finally he settled at Leyden, where, in 1672, he obtained an inn-keeper's licence and where he died in 1679. It would appear that his wild habits interfered little with his work, as he left a great many pictures. Brakenburg is among his imitators.

Steen produced so many good pictures of almost equal merit that it is difficult to choose among them. The picture in the Mauritshuis at The Hague, *As Old Folk Sing, Young Folk Pipe*, shows most of his qualities to perfection. In composition it is a little unusual in conception. It is more customary with him to compose his canvases more spaciously, not so "close up." This is a spirited composition; the numerous figures are rhythmically arranged and the boisterous treatment is typical of most of his work. His sense of character, which made him a good portrait-painter, is well seen in this picture. His humour is delightful, particularly in the figure of the boy on the right, who is taking a pull at a long pipe offered him by a hilarious gentleman in long curls and a tall hat. In his painting *Light Come, Light Go*, at Rotterdam, he shows a spirit of moral satire akin to that of Hogarth. His work is well represented in the National Gallery, although by small pictures.

Another great painter in the same genre, of equal rank with Steen, was Adriaen van Ostade † (1610–1685). He painted with similar enjoyment, though with more restraint, in a lighter vein and with a more limited palette. He was a pupil of Frans Hals, in whose studio he met his friend Adriaen Brouwer (1605–1638), who is now considered to belong to the Flemish School. Van Ostade was a son of a weaver who had eight children. His brother Isaack was also a painter. Adriaen's work, compared with Jan Steen's, gains something by its restraint. The latter's composition, whilst always efficient, followed academic lines; Van Ostade was freer and more natural. He found his design in the subject itself, while Steen was more apt to impose a preconceived design on his subjects. So one gets a greater sense of spontaneity from Van Ostade's work. He was an industrious fellow; besides a great number of oil-paintings, he produced many gaudy water-colours—an interesting instance of the early use of that medium—and about fifty etchings, some of which have served as models for forged pictures.

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† Plates 29 and 30

† Plate 15

In his earlier work he devoted himself almost entirely to dancing and drinking scenes, with sudden lighting and rather violent action, but after 1640 his work became quieter and more harmonious in lighting, and domestic scenes, games and conversation pieces began to appear. He also tried his hand at Biblical subjects and portraits. These were unimportant, and he remains essentially the painter of the people. His little picture *Courtship* (in the National Gallery) is a graceful example of his conversation pieces. *The Alchymist*, in the same Gallery, is a good example of his mastery of light in its gentle, suffusing radiance. Unlike his friend Brouwer, he rather avoided adventures in low-life, preferring to paint honest and decent people devoting themselves to gaiety, singing and drinking and playing such games as skittles and bowls. At times he showed a homely tenderness, as in his picture of *The Rustic Family*. In *The Village Dance* he revealed a quiet sense of humour.

Adriaen van Ostade's brother Isaack (1621–1649) became his pupil, and at first he painted pictures which so closely resembled Adriaen's that they were sometimes confused. Later he worked in his own peculiar sphere, painting more open-air country scenes enlivened with figures and animals. According to Smith, he painted 112 pictures—a good number considering the shortness of his life. Many other painters followed in the same path, such as Cornelis Bega (1620–1664) and Cornelis Dusart (1660–1704), pupils of the elder Ostade. Dusart was probably his most faithful follower—see *The Village Fair* at Amsterdam. But none of them rivalled their master. These genre-paintings present a pageant of Dutch life in the seventeenth century so vividly that one almost has the impression of having personally experienced them.

Before passing on, we must consider the work of Hendrik Avercamp † (1585–*c.* 1664), the great painter of winter scenes and skating pictures. Although his work, with its numerous small figures, may recall that of Brueghel, its spirit is essentially Dutch: it is realistic and free from fantasy. Avercamp, who was incurably dumb, early showed talent for drawing, and studied under the landscape-painter Coninxloo (1554–*c.* 1607). His paintings are rarer than his drawings. His best picture, *Winter Scene*, is in the Rijksmuseum at Amsterdam, but the little picture of the same title in the National Gallery is a typical example of his composition, with the leafless tree and humble dwellings in the foreground and a *château* and other buildings in the distance, while the space between is filled with gaily-dressed skaters.

It is natural that still-life, as such, should have occupied the attention of so many Dutch painters, for the Dutch like 'things' for their own sake. Verisimilitude was their sole aim in such painting. They never used their subjects as a means of evolving harmonies of colour or design, as for example the French have done, but solely from the point of view of realism. Their execution was admirably efficient, as always, and, within their limited perception of the effects of light on colour—which at that period did not greatly concern painters—they hold a high place in the study of the art of painting. They delighted in painting flowers, fruit, glass, silver and so on; such things afforded opportunity for the display of technical skill. Their painting of flowers is in a class apart. They invented a formula of rather flat decorative treatment, in which the flowers are painted with great care and much detail, as though for illustration to botanical reference books. They are admirable as decoration, but leave much to be desired as renderings of the subtle and fugitive beauty of flowers.

David de Heem the Elder ‡ (1570–1632), one of the first to adopt this branch of art, was, however, much less successful than his better-known son. He painted flowers, fruit, dead insects and animals, but he was little more than a sign-painter, the purpose for which still-life was originally applied in Holland. He is represented in the National Gallery by a small picture of *Fruit and Flowers*. But old De Heem not only originated a style, he founded a line of painters of still-life: children and grandchildren. The best of these, Jan Davidsz de Heem (1606–1683/84), is well known in this country, where his pictures are much sought after. He showed great skill, talent and good taste, particularly in elaborate composition. He enveloped his fruits and flowers in warm light, very effective against a sombre background.

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† Plate 5

‡ Plate 10

Many other artists, attracted by their style and their success, followed in their steps; the best known is Abraham Mignon (1640–1679), who, however, was inferior to his master, De Heem, in many respects. The latter's closest rival was Jan van Huysum † (1682–1749), son of Justus, an interior decorator and painter of flowers. Jan's paintings were freer and more natural than those of De Heem. He also painted many water-colours, and had a love for landscape, which he painted in his spare time, somewhat in the style of Poelenburgh. His youngest brother, Jacobus van Huysum, may be mentioned because he passed his life in copying his brother's pictures, thus deceiving many collectors. He came to England, where he made a considerable sum by his counterfeits.

Another painter of flowers, contemporary with Jan van Huysum, was a woman. Rachel Ruysch (1664–1750) was a remarkable person. Her father was a Professor of Anatomy in Leyden. She was born in Amsterdam, and died there, never ceasing to paint in spite of her great age. In spite of her industry she left comparatively few pictures. It was said of her that she produced more children than pictures, for she had married a portrait-painter, Jurian Pool, and had a large family. She showed remarkable skill in painting flowers, but her colouring was rather cold. Rachel studied under Willem van Aelst (1620–1679), a gifted artist who had a fondness for painting dead animals and birds. He travelled in Italy and France, where he enjoyed a success denied to him at home. He was surpassed by Jan Weenix (1640–1719), an artist whose name is fairly well known in London auction-rooms. Like his father, Jan Baptist Weenix (*c.* 1621–1660), he began by painting sea-ports, but through Van Aelst he discovered his true vocation, the painting of dead animals, which he performed with incredible precision. His pictures are all remarkably truthful, but he excelled most in painting hares. His cousin, Melchior de Hondecoeter (1636–1695), devoted his life to the painting of birds in every capacity, for the decoration of the richer houses in Amsterdam.

Even a brief study of Dutch still-life would be incomplete without some mention of Heda and Kalf. Willem Klaasz Heda (1594–*c.* 1680/82) was a notable painter whose pictures, for some reason, are remarkably rare. His subjects usually consisted of a silver cup, a plate and a cut lemon and variations on this theme. Better known are the works of Willem Kalf (1622–1693), who painted similar subjects in a robuster, more solid manner. He excelled in the painting of glass, but his work lacks the peculiar elegance of Heda's. Finally, there was a little-known artist, Esaias Boursse (1631–1672), who had a free and vigorous style which suggests the work of the great French master, Chardin. Boursse was in the service of the East India Company, and wasted much of his life in voyages to and from India. One of his rare pictures is in the Wallace Collection.

For the sake of convenience, we may here consider the work of Philips Wouwerman † (1619–1668). Although his earlier work was mostly landscape, he is usually associated with pictures of soldiers and cavaliers on horseback, and other military subjects; this may be counted a branch of genre-painting. Jan Wynants taught him to paint landscape ; he also studied under his father, Hals and Verbeck.

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† Plate 41

† Plate 26

Wouwerman's original interest in Biblical subjects did not last long ; he soon turned to landscapes, and then to military subjects. It has been pointed out that the landscape in some of his work does not suggest the scenery of Western Holland, and it has been surmised that, in early youth, he may have visited Italy and France. His spirited compositions, in most of which horses play an important part, show a keen appreciation of the picturesque. He liked strong effects of light and shadow and dark masses of cloud and smoke. It has been noted that a white horse usually forms the principal luminous object in his pictures. During his comparatively short life he produced an astonishing number of pictures—800 have been catalogued by Smith—and if there was some repetition, there was also a remarkable variety.

V. LANDSCAPE, ARCHITECTURE AND MARINE

The Dutch painters were very successful in landscape-painting. They achieved some works of quiet lyrical beauty which are as fine in their way as anything produced elsewhere. Their exploration of this domain was not marked by any adventurous discovery. Roughly speaking, their landscape is divided into two classes which are exemplified by the grey, pensive note struck by Van Goyen and Ruisdael, and the more robust and realistic style of Hobbema. There were one or two individual variations, such as the panoramic landscapes of Philips Koninck and the strange romantic landscapes of Hercules Seghers (*c.* 1590–*c.* 1640).

It was in the painting of landscape and sea-pieces that the Dutch were most poetical. With the close proximity of the sea, they had a constantly changing variety of effects to interest them and to provide problems for the exercise of their greatest skill. If they showed a preference for sad, grey and sombre effects, it may have been that such were the most prevalent. Even at the beginning of their art, landscape was the principal occupation of the School. It was not neglected by the miniature and primitive painters ; indeed, there may be some truth in the claim that the Dutch were first to understand and interpret Nature. Above all, they were natural ; there is nothing in their landscape that corresponds with the rather theatrical compositions of Poussin and Claude Lorrain.

Jan Josefz van Goyen † (1596–1656) was the leader of the homely, native school of landscape. He was born at Leyden, that city of many artists. He began early, having had five teachers before he was nineteen, when he paid a short visit to France. On his return he entered the studio of Esaias van de Velde (*c.* 1590–1630) in Haarlem. He was the first to discover a poetry in the unbroken horizons, which if monotonous in form were always changing in effect. The pictures of his first period were small, but they showed remarkable proficiency, and perhaps some influence of his last master. It was after 1634, when he settled at The Hague, that he attained full development. Then, having emancipated himself from the methods of Esaias van de Velde, his landscapes were thoroughly his own. He was a sensitive draughtsman, but limited in colour perception. His marvellously light touch gave great transparency to his skies and streams. The cool greys and greens of his later work are in marked contrast to the brighter colour and heavier handling of his first period. He had many imitators, but they could not match his depth of feeling and dexterity of handling.

† Plate 18

There was a certain uniformity in his subjects: such pictures as *View of Dordrecht* and *View on the Meuse* are essentially the same. The *River Scene* (National Gallery), which belongs to the year 1645, is a typical example of his composition and handling. He had many pupils, among them Jan Steen, Nicolas Berchem and Simon de Vlieger (1612–1660). The last named closely resembled his master in facility of technique, but showed more variety of colour.

Salomon van Ruisdael (1600–1670) painted landscapes of considerable talent in the manner of Van Goyen, without being his pupil. He was eclipsed by his nephew Jacob. The latter, who had the good sense to be born the son of a frame-maker, became one of the leading lights of the Dutch School. Jacob † was born in Haarlem in 1628 or 1629, and died in 1682. At that time there was a reaction against the older school of Van Goyen. More colour was demanded in opposition to the somewhat monochrome treatment of the earlier master.

Jacob was a very active painter. In his first period between 1646 and 1653 he produced, according to Dr. Bode, about a hundred pictures. These were simple works, with much detail, a little opaque at first, but gradually becoming clearer in the shadows as excess of detail disappeared. About 1659 he made an excursion into Germany, visiting Cleves and Münster, and painting the Castle of Bentheim, a freely wooded subject in Sir Otto Beit's collection. Most of his work was done when he was a resident of Amsterdam from 1659 to 1681. There he produced most of his masterpieces: landscapes with distant views, sea-pieces, interiors of woods and winter studies.. The *View of Haarlem* at the Mauritshuis, The Hague, is a masterpiece of distant-view painting. Of a different sort, but equally a masterpiece, is *The Mill* at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. This is a bold design, with a strong, stormy effect of light and shade, such as delighted the old master. Unhappily, after 1675 his powers began to fade, and some of his pictures have darkened owing to the dark ground coming up through the too-thin over-painting. He developed a craving for more grandiose effects similar to the Norwegian pictures by Everdingen, and he began to paint mountain and waterfall pictures, working up from secondhand material. These paintings, heavy in tone and lacking in conviction of firsthand impression, have sometimes been more esteemed—though wrongly—than his earlier and greater work. They led Goethe to discover in Ruisdael a kind of mystic symbolism.

Jan Wynants † (*c.* 1625–1682) has a special interest, as his work is supposed to have been the first and greatest influence on Gainsborough's landscape-painting. Very little is known about his life, but he was an exceptionally talented painter, and is claimed by some authorities to have opened up a new and true path to modern landscape-painting.

There is not much variety in his tasteful work, but he had a definite sense of aerial perspective, rare in his day. The figures and animals in his pictures were painted by others, among them Lingelbach, Adriaen van de Velde and Stokade. Brief mention must be made of Aert van der Neer ‡ (1603–1677), as he is so well known as the painter of moonlight and winter scenes. He was the father of Eglon van der Neer, painter of interiors with figures. He was financially unsuccessful and unable to live by his art. His work shows a delicate perception of atmospheric effect.

A notable contrast to Ruisdael, as man and painter, was Meindert Hobbema § (1638–1709). He was a comfortable, good-natured *bourgeois*, not over-fond of work. Unperturbed by an imagination such as distracted Ruisdael, he was content to paint plain landscape as he found it around him. He may be said to have copied Nature, but he did it extremely well. Hobbema was born in Amsterdam, and did not meet the Haarlem master until after 1659; nevertheless, he

† Plate 25

† Plate 23 ‡ Plate 22 § Plate 38

must have studied the works of Ruisdael before that date. His period of productivity was short; unless moved by necessity, his interest in art seems to expire. In fact, he secured a post in the wine customs, and the need to paint for a living was removed. His earliest dated work is in 1659, and very few of his pictures come from after 1670. It is surprising, therefore, to find the date 1689 on his most famous picture, *The Avenue, Middelharnis* (National Gallery). Earlier dates have been suggested for this picture, but in any case it cannot have been painted before 1682, when the beacon on the East Dike was put up at the demand of the fishermen. The picture actually hung in Middelharnis Town Hall until 1822, its place being afterwards taken by a copy made by A. van der Kooght. It found its way, through Rotterdam and Edinburgh, to the Peel Collection, and so to the National Gallery.

His work is straightforward and needs no explanation; he had a restful sense of composition and a fondness for painting sunlight rather unusual in Dutch painters. There are no signs of development in his work; his later pictures show a tendency to pettiness and over-much detail. *The Avenue*, with its large sense of design, is not characteristic of the bulk of his painting, which was mainly of woodland views. He had considerable influence on Old Crome, whose last words are said to have been, "Hobbema, how I have loved thee!" Sometimes the figures in his pictures were painted by A. van de Velde and Lingelbach.

Before passing to the cattle-painters, we must take a glance at Philips Koninck † (1619–1688), one of the very few disciples of Rembrandt who devoted themselves to landscape. Like his master, he delighted in large panoramic views. His place in landscape is next to Rembrandt and Vermeer of Delft. He painted a few portraits, including the *Self Portrait* which is in the Uffizi.

Adriaen van de Velde ‡ (*c.* 1635–1672), son of the elder and brother of the younger Willem van de Velde, died young. He was one of the most accomplished of the Dutch "little masters," painting figures and landscape with equal success. He was a pupil of Wynants and Paul Potter, equalling the former and surpassing the latter. His best work is seen in his small silvery-grey coast pictures, in which he shows a fine feeling for *plein air*.

Pictures of cattle in landscape were very popular with the Dutch. The best known of their painters is Aelbert Cuyp † (1620–1691), a versatile artist who painted portraits, figures, animals and landscape with great success. He has a great reputation, in spite of the fact that his work was very unequal, his early pictures being laboured and petty, his later, too often, "pedantic and unpleasing." But at his best he stands alone. At an early age he had lessons from his father, Jacob G. Cuyp, and painted, to begin with, simple views of the coast and stretches of the Rhine and Maas. It was in the 1650's that he developed his full powers; from 1655 to 1670 he was at his best. His cattle may not be so good or so well studied as those of Paul Potter or Adriaen van de Velde, but his pictures were suffused with golden light. To that quality he owes his poetic distinction. His best portraits date from 1658, when he painted many of the country nobility round Dordrecht, often on horseback. The picture of *Cattle and Figures* (National Gallery), known as *The Large Dort*, shows to advantage his ability as painter of cattle, figures, still-life and landscape. It has his characteristic golden tone.

In the Mauritshuis at The Hague is a picture of universal reputation. This is Paul Potter's famous *Bull*—a much overrated life-size production, admired, apparently, because of its size. Paul Potter ‡ (1625–1654), son of Pieter Potter, a little-known painter, worked with his father before studying under N. Moeyaert. His works are generally of small dimensions, and such are

† Plate 19 ‡ Plate 37

† Plate 20 ‡ Plate 27

infinitely preferable to his three large efforts: *The Bull*, *The Boar Hunt* and the equestrian portrait of *Dr. Tulp*. By his perfection of drawing and knowledge of anatomy, he was able to achieve a remarkable feeling of truthfulness in his work. He had a fine sense of luminosity. He died of consumption. Smith catalogued 103 of his works, a good number considering the shortness of his life and the complicated nature of his subjects.

A prolific painter, Nicolas Berchem (1620–1683) also painted cattle, but in a very different spirit. His real name was Claesz; Berchem seems to have been a nickname, which may account for the fact that his signature varied—sometimes it is Berchem, at others Berghem. He had many masters, but was, apparently, influenced chiefly by J. B. Weenix, an Italianiser who had spent many years in Rome. Berchem's work may be divided into three styles: the first, which shows the influence of Moeyaert and Van Goyen, was imbued with a quiet sentiment inspired by Dutch scenery; in the second he has become Italian, introducing conventional shepherdesses into his picture; thirdly, still Italian, his work is dry and hard and purely decorative. His weakness is partly due to the fact that he painted much from drawings and studies and too seldom from Nature. He added little to the greatness of the Dutch School, but his works are so numerous and are represented in so many Galleries that he cannot be ignored. Also, he might be regarded as a warning.

Architectual subjects, and particularly street scenes, attracted a number of Dutch painters, who displayed (as in other branches) a high degree of technical excellence without any experimental originality. This latter observation may not be strictly true of De Vries and Van Steenwick, who may be said to have invented a new style in their rather severe paintings of churches. The former, Jan Vredeman de Vries, born in 1527, was the first in the field. He devoted himself to the study of perspective, and left behind many sketch-books which are still consulted by students, but it was his pupil, Hendrick van Steenwick (1550–1604), who perfected this style of architectural painting. He accompanied his master through Flanders and to Hamburg. He painted many interiors of Gothic churches and Lutheran meeting-houses filled with small figures, which have a kind of austere perfection and represent a side of Dutch character. The figures were sometimes painted in by Franckens. His son, Hendrick junior (1580–after 1649), was born in Frankfort, but worked at The Hague and Antwerp before coming to London in 1629, where he was employed, among other things, in painting architectural backgrounds to the Royal Portraits by Van Dyck and Mytens.

Two painters who specialised in churches must not be forgotten. Pieter Jansz Saenredam (1597–1665) introduced a new note into church painting. He began to study the effects of light and shade, an element neglected by his more severe predecessors. Such fine use did he make of this that his work, which has a certain poetic mystery, places him high above most of the painters of his kind and gives him a rank equal to that of Pieter de Hooch among genre painters. His picture of *The Church at Assendelft* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam) is a most satisfactory painting.

Emmanuel de Witte (*c.* 1618–1692) also practised the more modern manner. His early efforts were concerned with portraits and genre, but he was soon occupied almost exclusively with church interiors—at first rather brown, but later in a clear, silvery key. He had considerable technical efficiency, but his work was more academic than Saenredam's. There is an interior of his, *Woman at the Virginals*, which shows his truly remarkable power of painting recession.

It was about the middle of the seventeenth century that certain artists began to devote themselves seriously to street scenes. The Dutch towns are very picturesque, with their tree-lined canals and reflections. One of the first was Jan Beerestraaten (1622–1666).

He travelled a great deal in his own country, painting monuments, squares and streets wherever he went. A vigorous painter, with a good sense of composition, he escaped an excess of detail. Two brothers, Job (1628–1693) and Gerrit Berck-Heyde (1638–1698), followed in his steps. The former was the better, and often painted the figures in his brother's pictures.

These painters were eclipsed by Jan van der Heyden † (1637–1712). He was called the Gerard Dou of architectural painters, but I am not sure that that is altogether a compliment. His work is only occasionally overburdened with detail. His subjects are always bathed in gentle, warm light. A favourite subject was *The House in the Wood*—a *château* near The Hague, where the first Peace Conference was held. He had a great interest in mechanics; he invented the fire-engine and introduced the use of street lamps.

There is a close connection between marine and landscape-painters in Holland, and if we were to include those of the latter who had also painted the sea, the number of marine painters would be much greater than it is.

We have already noted that Hendrick Vroom, born in 1566, a contemporary of Steenwick, the church painter, was the first Dutchman to paint sea pictures. His work appeared at a time when Holland was beginning to emerge as a sea Power, and his pictures had an immediate success. They are not so greatly esteemed now, for they are, indeed, primitive, the perspective being queer and the water painted in a conventional manner. Nevertheless they have the charm of simple sincerity.

The name most honoured in Dutch marine painting is Van de Velde and, in particular, that of Willem the younger. This is the most notable case of a whole family devoted to art, which seems to be a peculiarity of the Dutch. Esaias van de Velde we have already considered; it is said, but has not been proved, that he was the father of Willem the elder (1610–1693). This Willem went to sea as a boy, and thus acquired the knowledge of ships in all their detail which is so notable in his pictures. He painted ships of the East India Company, and as a result was invited to London about 1677, where he was warmly supported by Charles II and James II.

His son Willem van de Velde † (1633–1707) surpassed his father in delicacy of atmospheric and poetic effect. He worked under his father, who taught him all he knew about ships. Later, in his father's absence, he worked in Simon de Vlieger's studio. At first he painted sea-fights, and there is a big picture, some nine feet long, of *The Port of Amsterdam*. But his charm lies in his quiet pictures of calm seas with shipping, in which silvery daylight sometimes deepens into a sunny glow. Like his father, he lived in London, at Greenwich, under Royal patronage. Horace Walpole wrote of him that he "was the greatest man that has appeared in this branch of painting; the palm is not less disputed with Raphael for history, than with Van de Velde for sea-pieces."

Ludoff Backhuysen (1631–1708) also painted the sea, preferring wrecks and stormy effects, which he studied from Nature in an open boat, often at considerable peril to himself and the boatmen. But he was more of a picture-maker on academic lines than Van de Velde. Abraham Storck (*c.* 1638–1710), whose work is well known in our auction-rooms, painted seaports in a competent but somewhat dull manner.

Finally, we must consider the work of Jan van de Cappelle ‡ (1624–1679), who might, on the strength of his best pictures, such as the impressive *Seashore*, be given a higher place than is usually allotted to him. The son of a dyer, Cappelle was self-taught, but based his style on that of Simon de Vlieger. *A Calm*, the National Gallery picture, is a typical example of his work. Occasionally he painted ice pictures. A friend of Rembrandt, who painted his portrait, he was a great collector of pictures.

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† Plate 39

† Plate 24 ‡ Plate 36

VI. DECLINE AND RECOVERY

DECADENCE set in in Dutch art at an earlier date than was the case with other Schools. The eighteenth century was a brilliant period in England, but in Holland it marked a sharp decline in the art of painting. Moreover, the period of decline lasted longer than elsewhere. Although Dutch art had maintained for a very long time a high level of consistent achievement, with moments of exceptional brilliancy, it had shown no signs of development. This was due mainly to the lack of an adventurous spirit and to the immunity of the nation to foreign influence in art, which may be good or bad but is usually stimulating. The very excellence of their predecessors had a depressing effect on the later painters. Unaware of new worlds to conquer, they were faced with the problem of painting the old familiar themes, without the possibility of throwing new light on them or of surpassing the excellence of previous technical achievement. For it so happened that at the end of the seventeenth century there was a fairly general lowering of the standard of talent among painters.

The spirit of invention—the discovery of new methods of expression and new angles of perception—which animates independent art, never very strong in Dutch art, was practically non-existent. Nothing was to be met with, in all branches of art, but mechanical imitation of the greater masters. So work became mannered, affected and exaggerated. Study of Nature was neglected; large works became merely decorative; small paintings were burdened with insignificant detail. Curiously enough, foreign influence played its part in bringing about decline. But the influence was social and popular rather than artistic. It grew originally from impact with the French under Louis XIV. Having vanquished the armies of the Grand Monarch in Flanders, the Dutch sought to import French fashions and imitate French manners in their chief cities.

About this time there became popular a man who was destined to play a prominent part in these disastrous innovations. Gerard de Lairesse (1641–1711), son of a modest painter, was born at Liége. After a period of wandering, in the course of which he acquired an admiration for Poussin and Lebrun—the good and the bad—he settled, while still young, in Holland. His conventional paintings of historical, Biblical and classical subjects, after the manner of Lebrun, found great favour in the eyes of " those people of importance" who filled the high places. That was enough to rouse the younger painters to envy and emulation. Moreover, he published in Amsterdam his *Great Book of Painting*; this had immense success, and was translated into three or four languages. During many years it was the handbook given to art students for instruction and guidance. In his latter years he used to lecture to the pupils of the Academy in Amsterdam.

A prolific painter, who did much to lead art along a perverse path, was Adriaen van der Werff (1659–1722). At first he followed his master, Eglon van der Neer, in the study of Nature, but impact with De Lairesse completely changed his outlook. He deserted Nature for the ideal, and produced a vast number of pictures of classical and sacred subjects with a few portraits. He received much patronage; the Elector Palatine paid him a pension and made him a Chevalier. His *Self Portrait* is in the National Gallery, while at Dulwich can be seen by the curious his picture of *The Judgment of Paris*.

To enumerate the painters of the eighteenth century would serve little purpose. Among them were a certain number who, while of little importance, were not so bad. There were, for example, Willem van Mieris (1662–

1747) and Isaac Moucheron (1667–1744), son of the better-known Frédéric (*c.* 1633–1686). Cornelis Troost (1697–1750), the son of a wine merchant, acquired a reputation rather for his drawings than his paintings. He imitated Rosalba Carriera and La Tour, but made a name for himself by his satirical and humorous drawings of Dutch comedy, in which he ridiculed the licentious manners then prevailing at Amsterdam. He has been called the Dutch Hogarth.

A little-known painter, Paul Constantin la Fargue (*c.* 1733–1782), attempted to carry on the old tradition, but succeeded only in imitating Ruisdael and some other of the older masters. His work was considered of sufficient importance—for an example, *The Market Place at The Hague*—to be bought by the National Gallery in 1903.

It was not until the nineteenth century was well advanced that there were signs of a definite revival. The earlier years of the century had shown, in the work of B. Jan Bree, J. B. van Hove, Pieneman, Verschuur and Nuyen, that painters had turned again to the study of Nature. The work of the period was not otherwise distinguished until Johannes Bosboom (1817–1891) appeared. He painted, in a charming and individual manner, town views and church interiors, in both oil and water-colour. His work may be seen at the Mesdag Museum at The Hague.

Theo de Bock (1851–1904) did landscapes and river scenes in a quiet manner, but a more important figure than either was Josef Israels † (1824–1911). Born in Grönningen, he studied under Pieneman and Kruseman before going to Paris to the studio of Picot and proceeding later to that of Delaroche. Under the influence of the latter he tried his hand at historical compositions that gave no clue to his real character, which was not revealed until his return to Holland in about 1856. Then be began to study and paint the life of Dutch fishermen. To that period belong the *Children of the Sea* and *The Evening on the Shore*, shown in the Paris Salon 1857. During the ensuing years he maintained a high artistic standard with similar subjects and occasional portraits. In some of the latter he approached his hero, Rembrandt, more nearly than any other modern painter has done. He shows a great gift of sympathy in his work, which is often low in tone and mysterious in lighting. He also practised etching, pastel and water-colour.

One of the most delightful painters of the time, Johann-Barthold Jongkind † (1819–1891), was a pupil of Isabey, the French artist. He painted scenes on the coasts of Normandy and Picardy and the streets of Paris. He was in touch with the French Impressionists, a fact which is evident in his beautiful picture of *Skating in Holland* (Tate Gallery), in which the subtle truth of colour and atmospheric effect are remarkable. In spite of his long residence in France, his pictures have an unmistakably Dutch flavour.

The best-known painters of the period are the three brothers Maris. Jacob, the eldest (1837–1899), studied first at The Hague and Antwerp before going to Paris in 1866 to work under Hébert. He returned to live and work at The Hague. Jacob's work shows some sympathy with the Barbizon School, but remains essentially Dutch. He painted landscapes, ports, rivers and the seashore, varying his work with such pictures as *Mother and Child* and *The Birdcage* (both in the Tate Gallery). He had a subtle sense of tone and good design. His brother, Matthew ‡ (1839–1917), was an artist of a different temperament. Like Jacob, he went to Hébert in Paris, 1868. His love of mysterious effects of light and of mystical subjects gave him a certain kinship in feeling (though not in technique) with the English Pre-Raphaelites. As a designer of stained glass he came to London in 1877, where he died, after living the life of a recluse.

Willem Maris (1844–1910), the youngest and least important of the three, received instruction from his brothers. He devoted himself to landscape and cattle-painting.

† Plate 44

† Plate 42 ‡ Plate 43

His work, both in oil and water-colour, has a fine clarity. With the Maris family one usually associates Anton Mauve (1838–1888), who studied and worked entirely in Holland. He painted country scenes, with figures and animals. He was a distinguished draughtsman, with a delicate sense of tone and colour. His picture *The Morning Ride* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam), figures on horseback on the sandy shore, recalls the work of Degas, with its beautiful drawing and fine sense of style. It is not possible here to do more than mention the work of other charming artists of the nineteenth-century Dutch School. G. H. Breitner (1857–1923) holds a place somewhat apart, as his work appears to have been influenced by Whistler. J. H. Weissenbruch (1824–1903), Albert Neuhuys (1844–1914), B. J. Blommers (1845–1914) all merit closer study for their distinguished work.

It is unfortunate that I am unable to include the greatest of the modern painters, Vincent Van Gogh (1853–1890), the authorities having decided that he belongs by adoption to the French School. The truth is that his early work is characteristically Dutch, but after his contact with French Impressionism, about 1886, a revolution occurred in his work, and he was completely dominated by French art. The change from the negative browns of his early painting to the pure colour of his later period is truly remarkable. Van Gogh is a striking example of the pure artist: one who uses his material solely for the purpose of realising his feelings. Never does he attempt to cultivate the graces or charms of paint for their own sake.

The modern painters of the Dutch School as a whole have maintained a standard of healthy normality in their work; beauty is still regarded as their legitimate aim. It will be interesting to see what the future has in store, now that the Dutch painters are able to work again. It is unlikely, knowing the national character, that they will fall victims to the ephemeral, even to gratify the snob or *épater le bourgeois*.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF PAINTERS

Geertgen tot Sint Jans, *c.* 1465–*c.* 1495
Lucas van Leyden, 1494–1533
Jan van Scorel, 1495–1562
Martin Heemskerck, 1498–1574
Jan Vredeman de Vries, 1527–1608
Hendrick van Steenwick the Elder, 1550–1604
Jan van Coninxloo, 1554–*c.* 1607
Hendrick Goltsius, 1558–1617
Cornelis van Haarlem, 1562–1638
Abraham Bloemaert, 1564–1651
Hendrick Vroom, 1566–1640
Michiel van Miereveld, 1567–1641
David de Heem the Elder, 1570–1632
Paul Moreelse, 1571–1638
Frans Hals, *c.* 1580–1666
Jacob Pynas, *c.* 1580–*c.* 1621
Jan van Ravesteyn, 1580–1665
Hendrick van Steenwick the Younger, 1580–after 1649
Pieter Lastman, 1583–1633
Geert Ter Borch, 1584–1662
Hendrik Avercamp, 1585–*c.* 1664
Cornelis van Poelenburgh, 1586–1667
Gerard Honthorst, 1590–1656
Esaias van de Velde, *c.* 1590–1630
Daniel Mytens, *c.* 1590–*c.* 1642
Hercules Seghers, *c.* 1590–*c.* 1640
Willem Klaasz Heda, 1594–1680/82
Jan van Goyen, 1596–1656
Thomas de Keyser, *c.* 1596–1667
Pieter Jansz Saenredam, 1597–1665
Johannes Verspronck, 1597–1662
Salomon van Ruisdael, 1600–1670
A. Palamedes, 1601–1673
Nicolas Knupfer, 1603–*c.* 1660
Aert van der Neer, 1603–1677
Adriaen Brouwer, 1605–1638
Rembrandt van Ryn, 1606–1669
Jan Davidsz de Heem, 1606–1683/84
Jacob Backer, 1608–1651
Adriaen van Ostade, 1610–1685
Willem van de Velde the Elder, 1610–1693
Simon de Vlieger, 1612–1660
Bartholomeus van der Helst, 1613–1670
Gerard Dou, 1613–1675
Carel Fabritius, *c.* 1614–1654
Govert Flinck, 1615–1660
Ferdinand Bol, 1616–1680
Gerard Ter Borch, 1617–1681
Emmanuel de Witte, *c.* 1618–1692
Philips Wouwerman, 1619–1668
Philips Koninck, 1619–1688
Cornelis Bega, 1620–1664
Quiryn van Brekelenkam, *c.* 1620–1668
Willem van Aelst, 1620–1679
Nicolas Berchem, 1620–1683
Aelbert Cuyp, 1620–1691
Isaack van Ostade, 1621–1649
Jan Baptist Weenix, *c.* 1621–1660
Gerbrandt van den Eeckhout, 1621–1674
Jan Abrahamsz Beerestraaten, 1622–1666
William Kalf, 1622–1693
Jan van de Cappelle, *c.* 1624–1679
Paul Potter, 1625–1654
Jan Wynants, *c.* 1625–1682
Jan Steen, 1626–1679
Jan de Bray, *c.* 1626–1697
Jan van Ruisdael, *c.* 1626–1697
Samuel van Hoogstraaten, 1627–1678
Jacob van Ruisdael, *c.* 1628–1682
Job Berck-Heyde, 1628–1693
Gabriel Metsu, 1629–1667
Pieter de Hooch, 1629–*c.* 1683
Esaias Boursse, 1631–1672
Ludoff Backhuysen, 1631–1708
Jan Vermeer, 1632–1675
Nicolas Maes, 1632–1693
Frédéric Moucheron, *c.* 1633–1686
Willem van de Velde the Younger, 1633–1707
Adriaen van de Velde, *c.* 1635–1672
Jacob Ochtervelt, *c.* 1635–1708/10
Eglon van der Neer, *c.* 1635–1703
Melchior de Hondecoeter, 1636–1695
Jan van der Heyden, 1637–1712
Gerrit Berck-Heyde, 1638–1698
Meindert Hobbema, 1638–1709
Abraham Storck, *c.* 1638–1710
Caspar Netscher, 1639–1684
Abraham Mignon, 1640–1679
Jan Weenix, 1640–1719
Gerard de Lairesse, 1641–1711
Godfried Schalcken, 1643–1706
Aart de Gelder, 1645–1727
Adriaen van der Werff, 1659–1722
Cornelis Dusart, 1660–1704
Willem van Mieris, 1662–1747
Rachel Ruysch, 1664–1750
Isaac Moucheron, 1667–1744
Jan van Huysum, 1682–1749
Cornelis Troost, 1697–1750
Paul Constantin la Fargue, *c.* 1733–1782
Bartholomeus Johannes van Hove, 1790–1880
Nicolas Pieneman, 1810–1860
Wouterus Verschuur, 1812–1874
Johannes Bosboom, 1817–1891
Johann-Barthold Jongkind, 1819–1891
J. H. Weissenbruch, 1824–1903
Josef Israels, 1824–1911
Jacob Maris, 1837–1899
Anton Mauve, 1838–1888
Matthew Maris, 1839–1917
Willem Maris, 1844–1910
Albert Neuhuys, 1844–1914
B. J. Blommers, 1845–1914
Théophile de Bock, 1851–1904
Vincent van Gogh, 1853–1890
George-Hendrik Breitner, 1857–1923

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SOME EARLIER BOOKS BY J. B. MANSON

Rembrandt
Hours in the Tate Gallery
Modern Painting
The Life and Work of Edgar Degas
English Oil-Colour Painters.
Ernest Bièler, Peintre Suisse

ACKNOWLEDGMENT is made to W. and F. Mansell for valuable assistance in the provision of photographic prints for Plates 9, 11, 21, 22, 25, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34 and 38. Plates 13 and 14 were supplied by Annan and Bulloz respectively. The prints for Plates 6, 16, 17, 19 and 36 were obtained from A. C. Cooper. Colour Plate 3 is reproduced by permission of Messrs. T. C. and E. C. Jack.

LIST OF PLATES

IN FULL COLOUR

THE ARTIST'S STUDIO *By Jan Vermeer*	Vienna	*Frontispiece*
THE LAUGHING CAVALIER *By Frans Hals*	Wallace Collection	*Plate* 2
THE SUPPER AT EMMAUS *By Rembrandt van Ryn*	Louvre	,, 3
A BOY BRINGING POMEGRANATES *By Pieter de Hooch*	Wallace Collection	,, 4

IN MONOCHROME (Photogravure)

WINTER SCENE *By Hendrik Avercamp*	National Gallery	,, 5
PRINCE RUPERT *By Gerard Honthorst*	The Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery	,, 6
A DUTCH LADY *By Michiel Jansz van Miereveld*	Wallace Collection	,, 7
THE MERRY LUTE PLAYER *By Frans Hals*	Chicago	,, 8
THE GYPSY GIRL *By Frans Hals*	Louvre	,, 9
FRUIT AND FLOWERS *By David de Heem the Elder*	National Gallery	, 10
THE YOUNG MOTHER *By Gerard Dou*	The Hague	,, 11
HENDRICKJE STOFFELS *By Rembrandt van Ryn*	National Gallery of Scotland	,, 12
PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF *By Rembrandt van Ryn*	National Gallery	,, 13
SELF-PORTRAIT *By Carel Fabritius*	Rotterdam	,, 14
COURTSHIP *By Adriaen Jansz van Ostade*	National Gallery	,, 15
THE GUITAR LESSON *By Gerard Ter Borch*	Rohoncz Collection	,, 16
CURIOSITY *By Gerard Ter Borch*	New York	,, 17
A RIVER SCENE *By Jan Josefz van Goyen*	National Gallery	,, 18
BEGINNING OF A STORM *By Philips Koninck*	The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres	,, 19
THE LARGE DORT *By Aelbert Cuyp*	National Gallery	,, 20
BANQUET OF THE CIVIC GUARD *By Bartholomeus van der Helst*	Amsterdam	,, 21
WINTER SCENE *By Aert van der Neer*	Cook Collection	,, 22
LANDSCAPE WITH DEAD TREES *By Jan Wynants*	National Gallery	,, 23
A COAST SCENE, WITH SHIPPING *By Willem van de Velde the Younger*	Wallace Collection	,, 24
THE MILL *By Jacob van Ruisdael*	Amsterdam	,, 25
THE FARRIER *By Philips Wouwerman*	Private Collection	,, 26
THE BULL *By Paul Potter*	The Hague	,, 27
A HOUSEWIFE AT WORK *By Nicolas Maes*	Wallace Collection	,, 28 *a*
THE LISTENING HOUSEWIFE *By Nicolas Maes*	Wallace Collection	,, 28 *b*
THE CHRISTENING FEAST *By Jan Steen*	Wallace Collection	,, 29
THE SCHOOLMASTER *By Jan Steen*	Pfungst Collection	,, 30
THE MUSIC LESSON *By Gabriel Metsu*	National Gallery	,, 31
COURTYARD OF A DUTCH HOUSE *By Pieter de Hooch*	National Gallery	,, 32
THE MESSENGER *By Pieter de Hooch*	Amsterdam	,, 33
LITTLE STREET IN DELFT *By Jan Vermeer*	Amsterdam	,, 34
THE GUITAR PLAYER *By Jan Vermeer*	Iveagh Bequest	,, 35
WINTER SCENE WITH A FROZEN RIVER *By Jan van de Cappelle*	Private Collection	,, 36
FROST SCENE *By Adriaen van de Velde*	National Gallery	,, 37
THE AVENUE, MIDDELHARNIS *By Meindert Hobbema*	National Gallery	,, 38
THE HOUSE IN THE WOOD *By Jan van der Heyden*	National Gallery	,, 39
A DUET *By Godfried Schalcken*	National Gallery	,, 40
FLOWER PIECE *By Jan van Huysum*	Private Collection	,, 41
SKATING IN HOLLAND *By Johann-Barthold Jongkind*	Tate Gallery	,, 42
THE WHITE HOUSE *By Matthew Maris*	Tate Gallery	,, 43
THE PHILOSOPHER *By Josef Israels*	Tate Gallery	,, 44

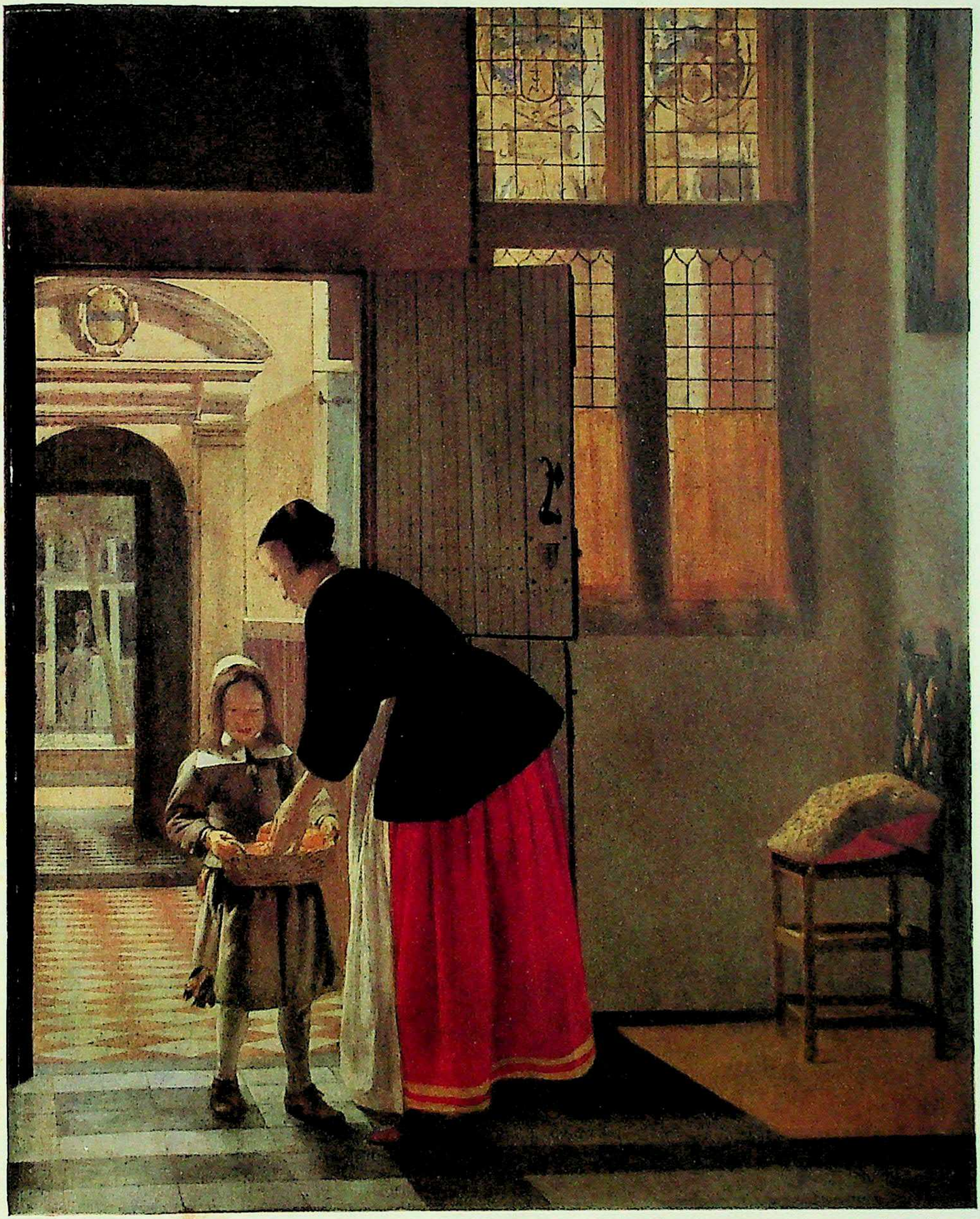

Plate 4 *Wallace Collection*

A BOY BRINGING POMEGRANATES *By Pieter de Hooch* (1629-*c.* 1683)

Original 28¾" × 23"

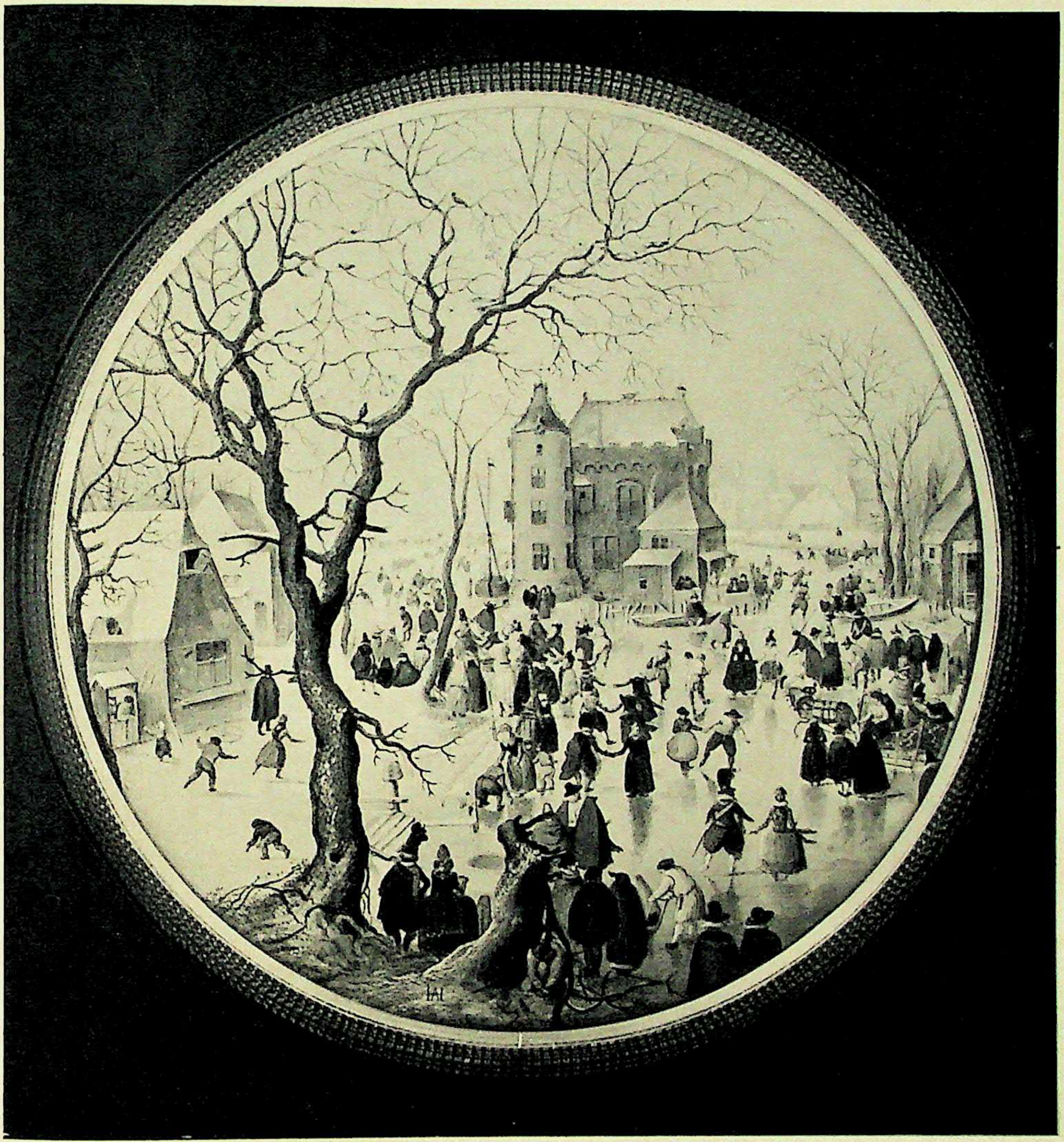

Plate 5 *National Gallery*

WINTER SCENE *By Hendrik Avercamp* (1585-*c.*1664)

Original 15½" *diameter*

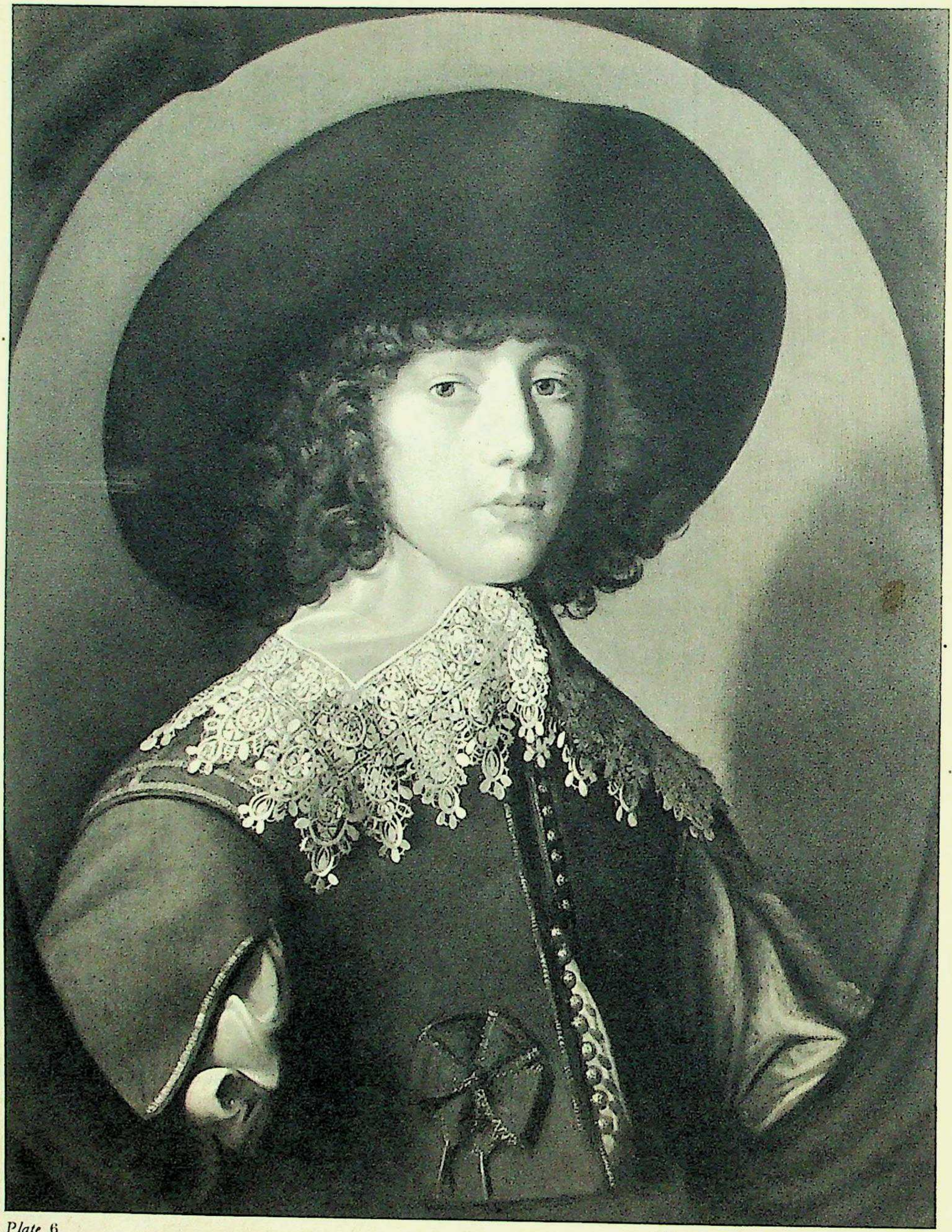

Plate 6

The Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery

PRINCE RUPERT *by Gerard Honthorst* (1590-1656)

Original 30″ × 23½″

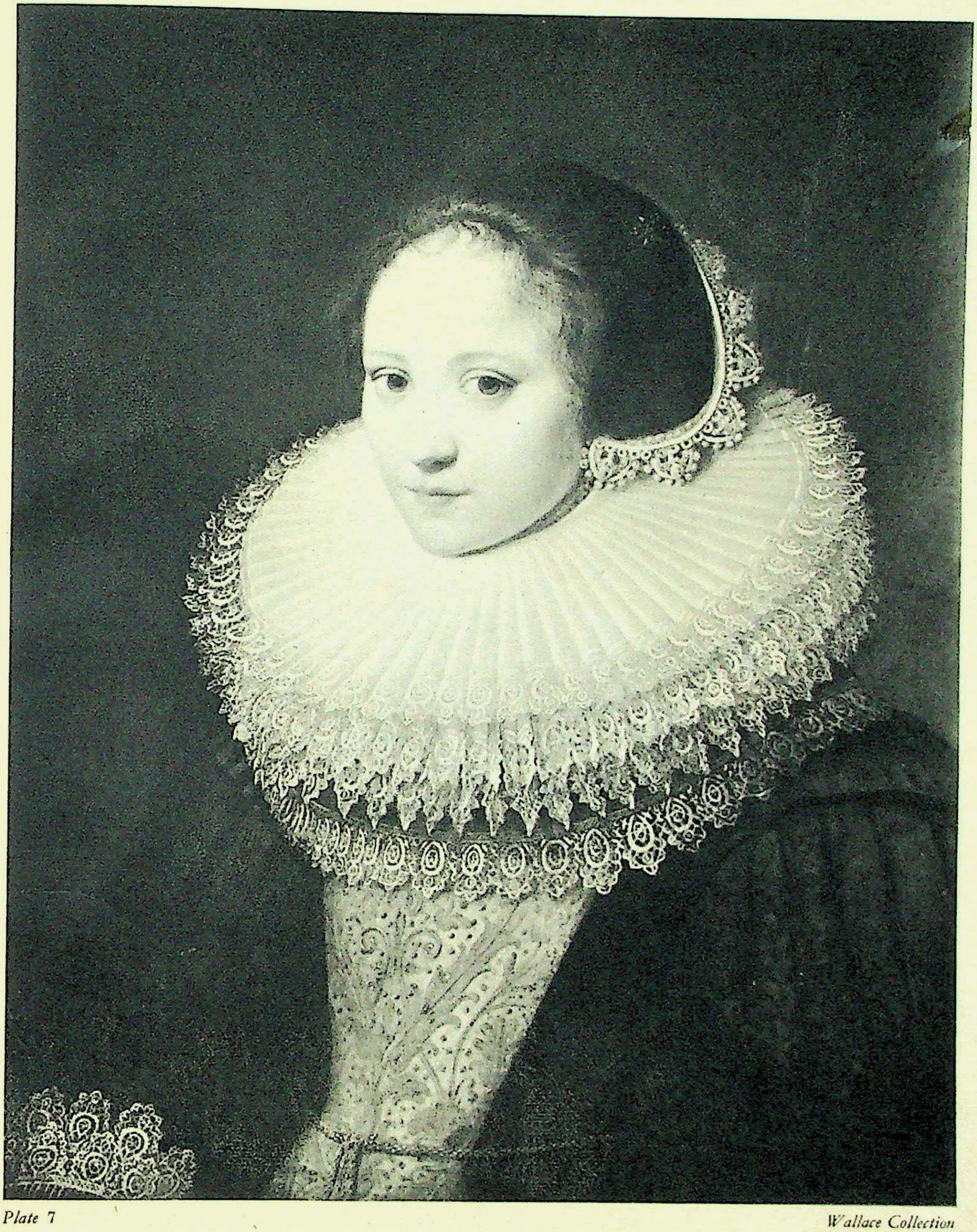

Plate 7 *Wallace Collection*

A DUTCH LADY *by Michiel Jansz van Miereveld* (1567-1641)

Original $25\frac{3}{4}'' \times 21\frac{1}{8}''$

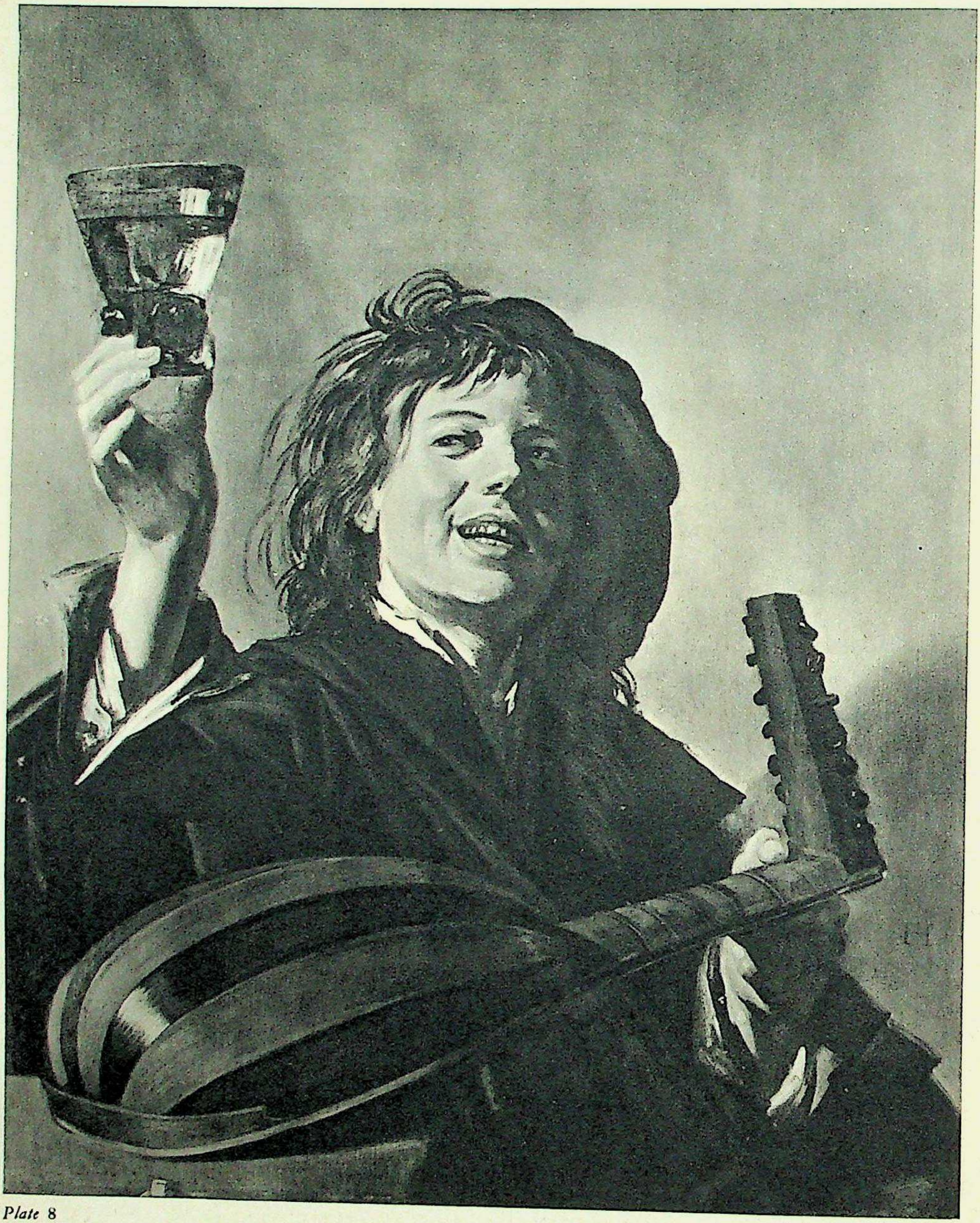

Plate 8

J. R. Thompson, Chicago

THE MERRY LUTE PLAYER *By Frans Hals*(c1580-1666)

Original 35½″×29½″

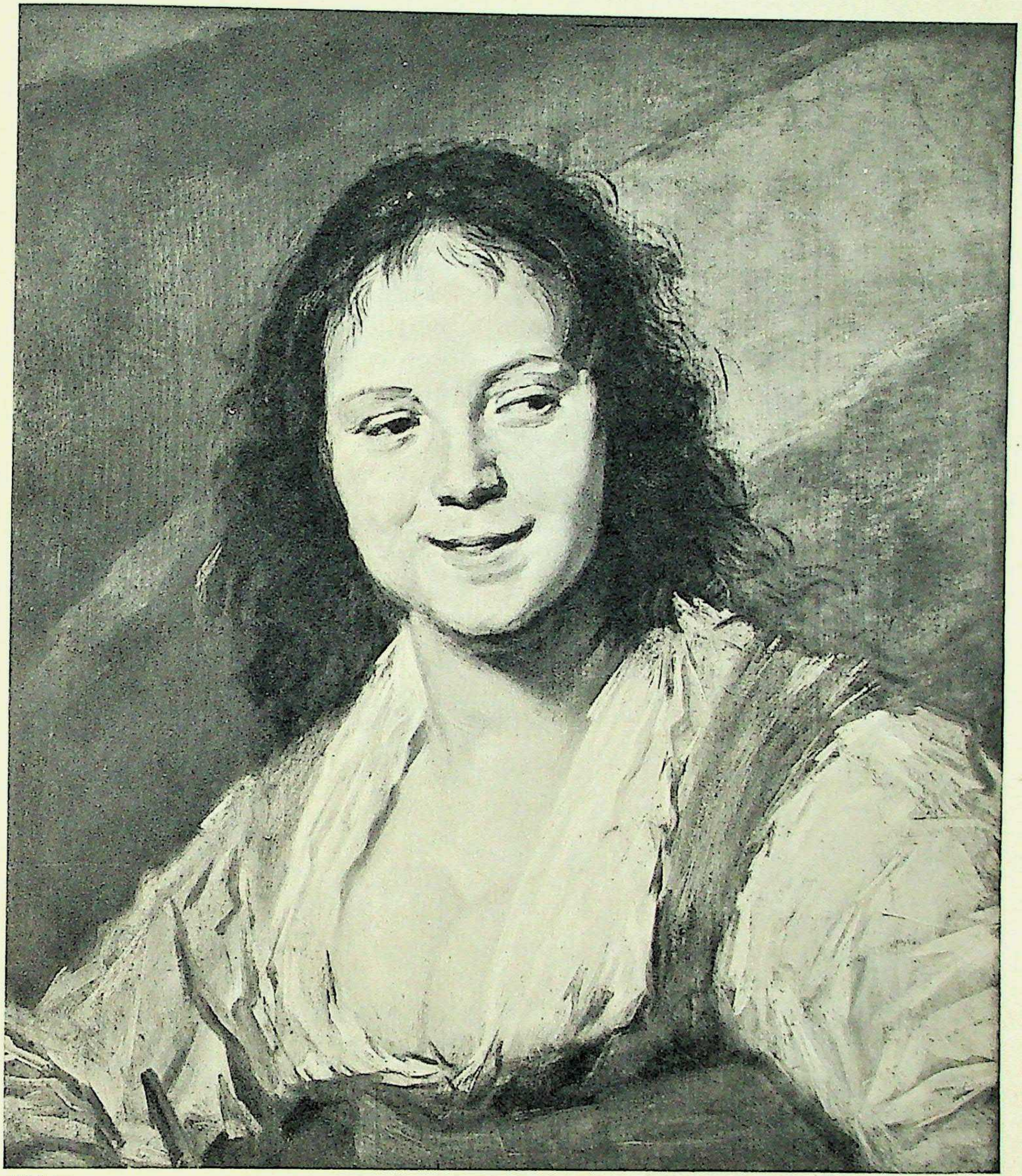

Plate 9

Louvre

THE GYPSY GIRL *by Frans Hals* (1580-1666)

Original 22¾″ × 20½″

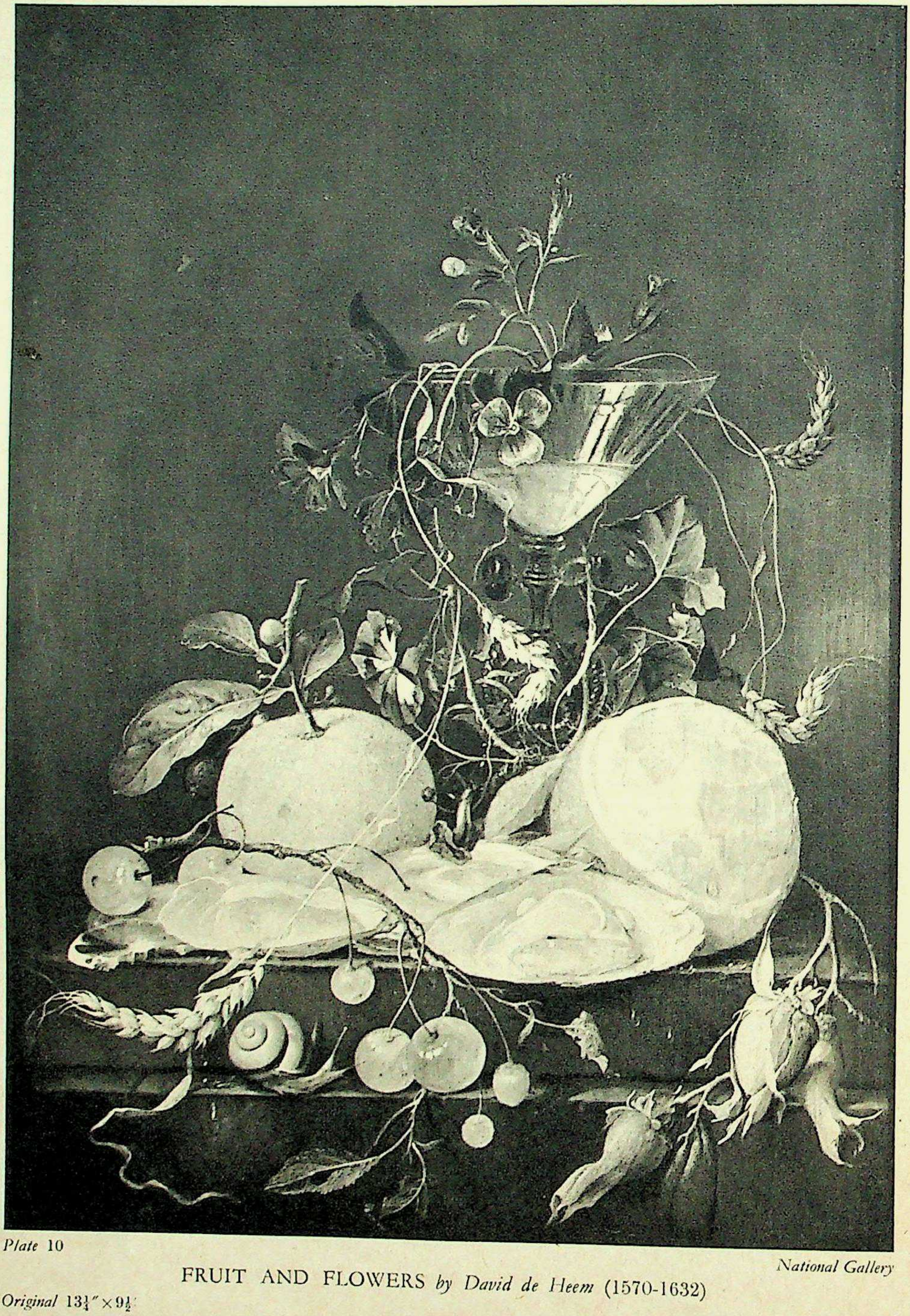

Plate 10

National Gallery

FRUIT AND FLOWERS *by David de Heem* (1570-1632)

Original 13¾″ × 9½″

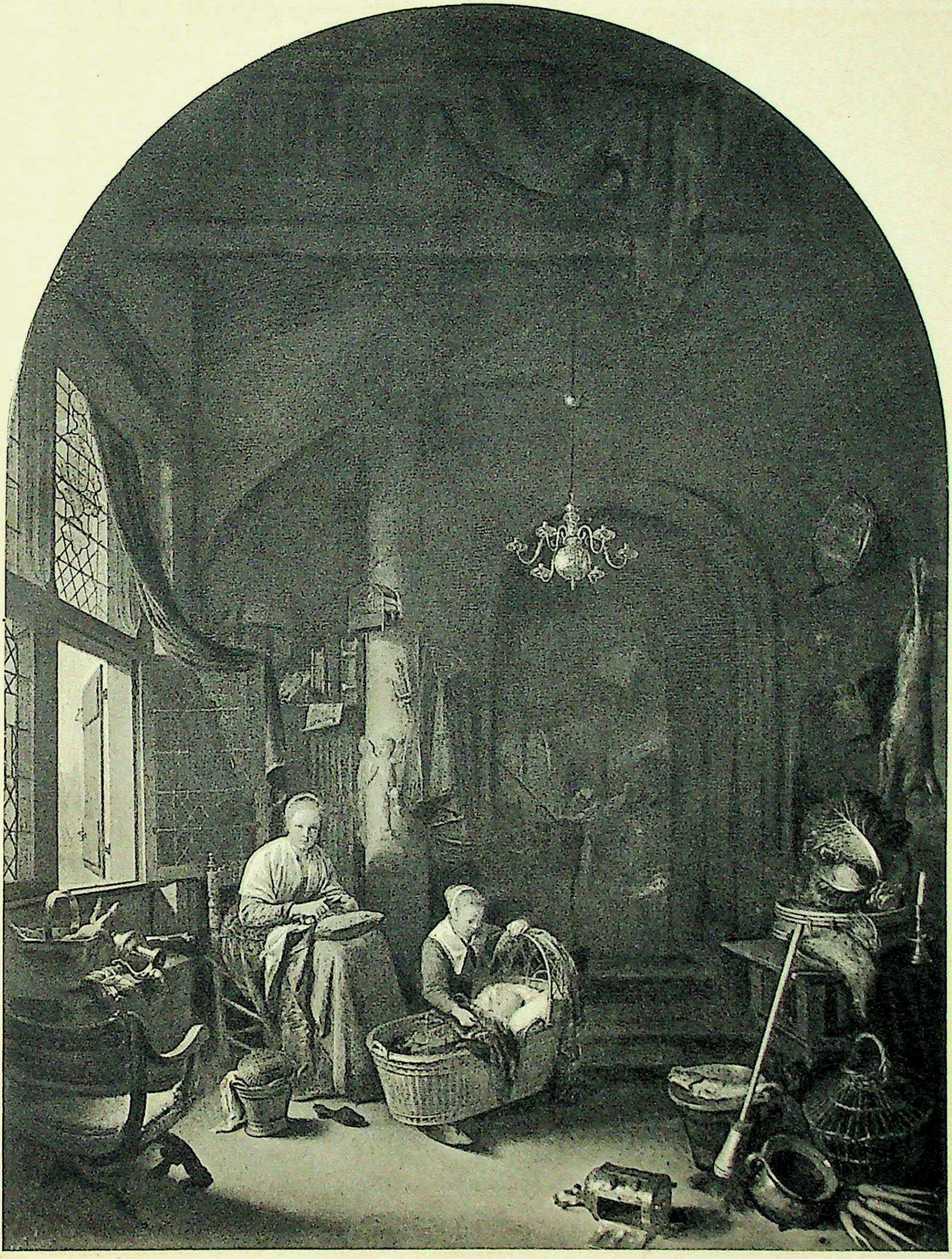

Plate 11 *The Hague*

THE YOUNG MOTHER *by Gerard Dou* (1613-1675)

Original 28½″ × 22″

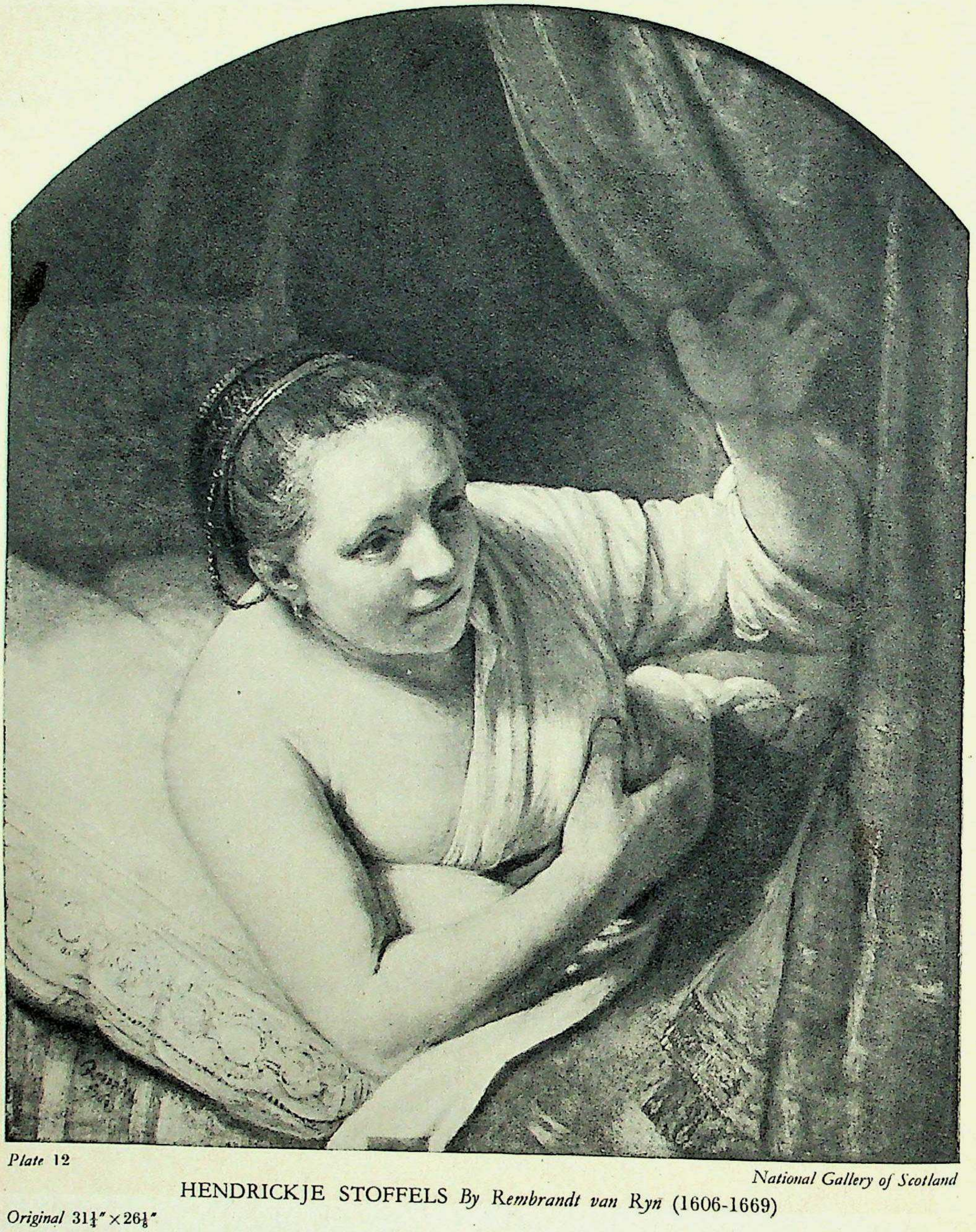

Plate 12

National Gallery of Scotland

HENDRICKJE STOFFELS *By Rembrandt van Ryn* (1606-1669)

Original 31¼″ × 26⅛″

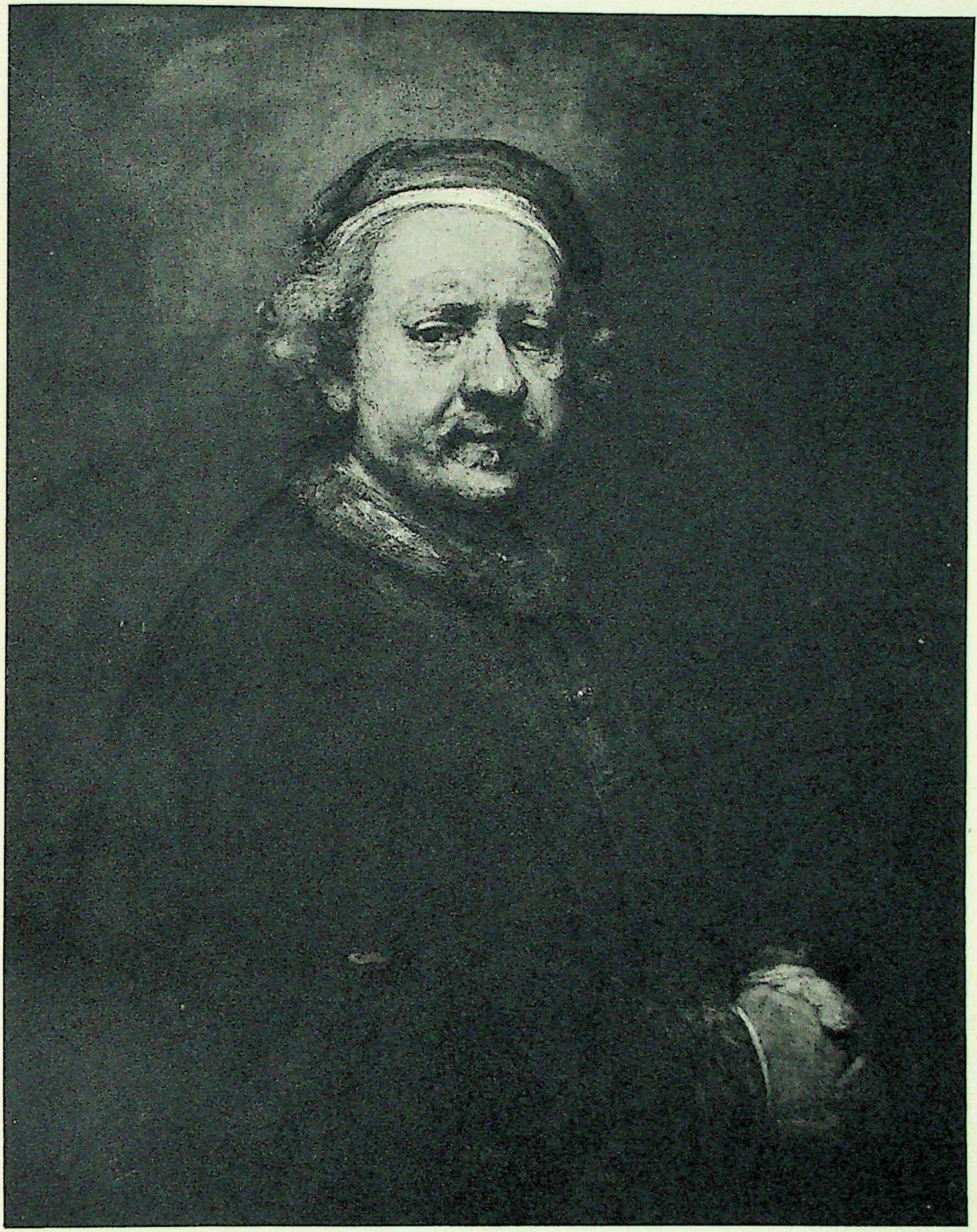

Plate 13 *National Gallery*

PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF *By Rembrandt van Ryn*

Original 33″ × 27½″

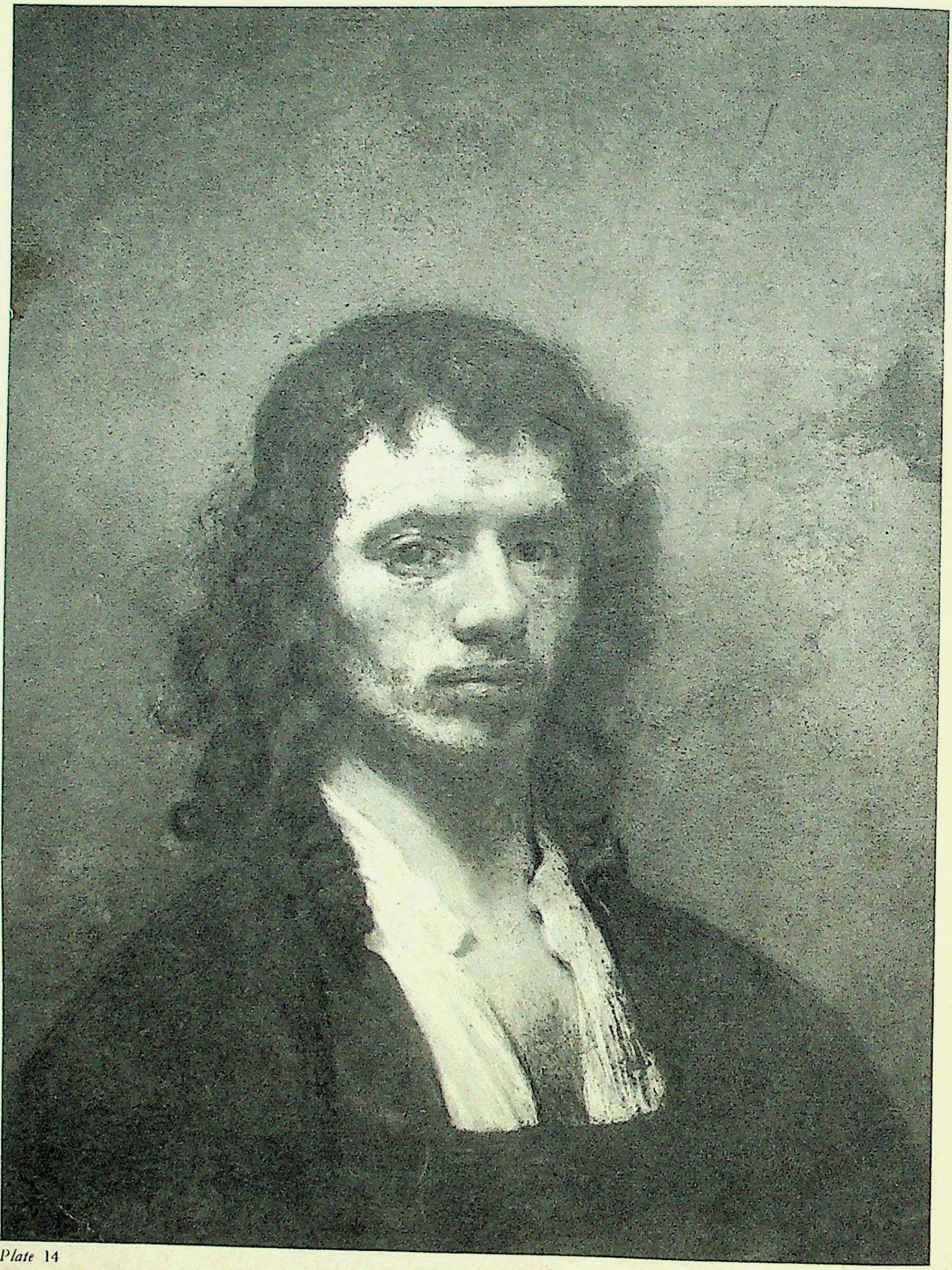

Plate 14

SELF-PORTRAIT *By Carel Fabritius*(c1614-1654)

Rotterdam

Original 25½″ × 19″

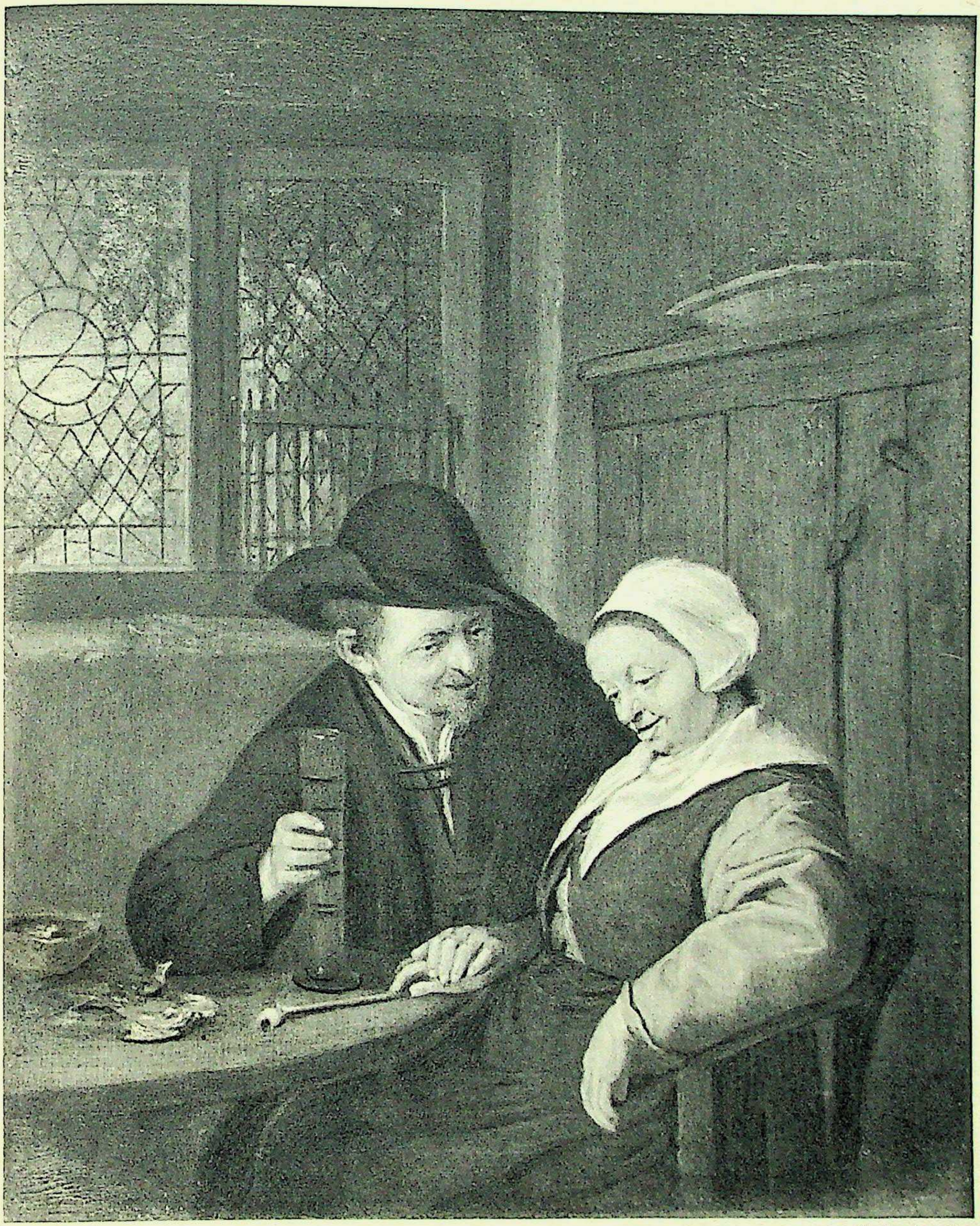

Plate 15 *National Gallery*

COURTSHIP *By Adriaen Jansz van Ostade* (1610-1685)

Original 10¾″ × 8½″

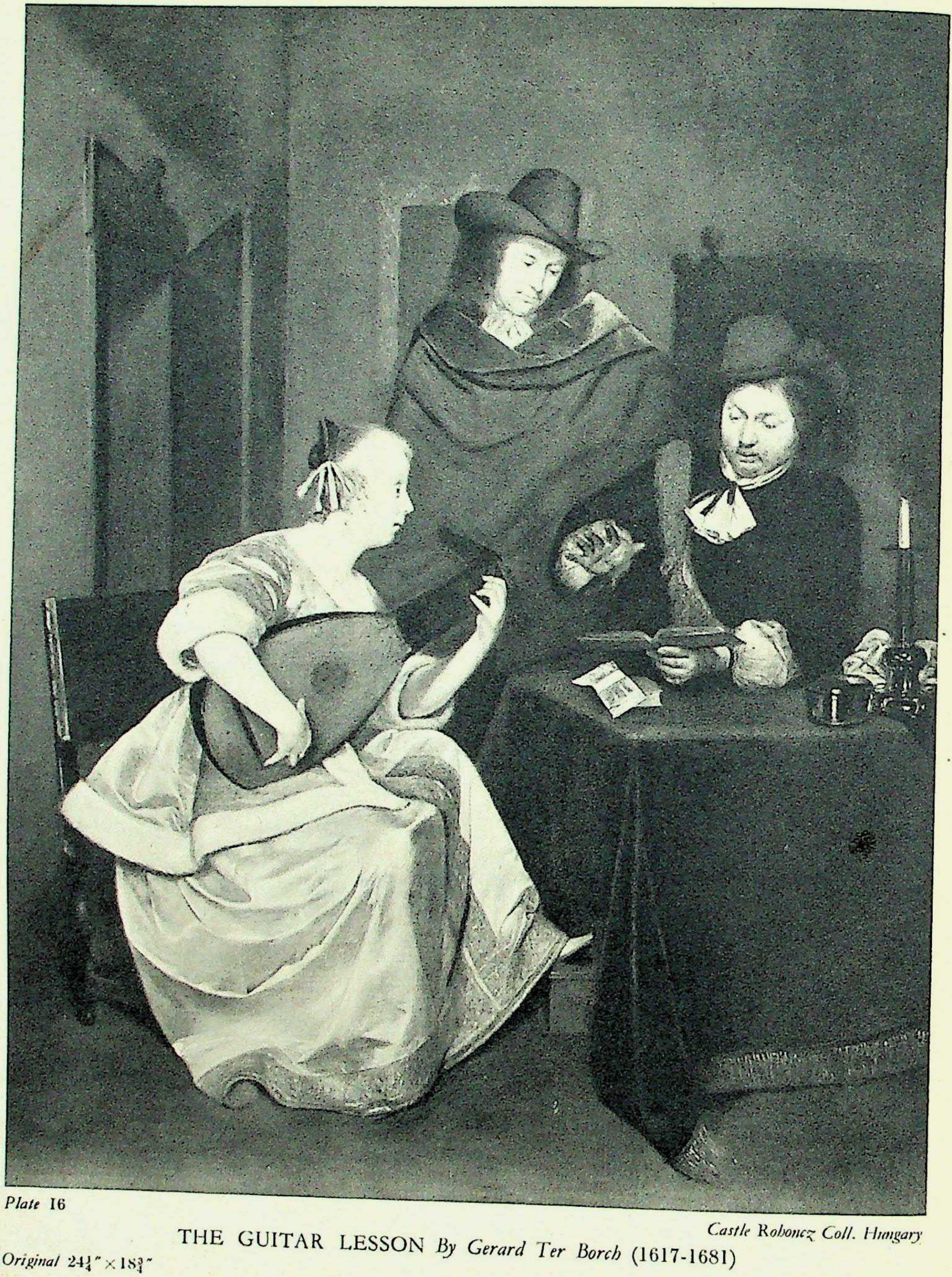

Plate 16

Castle Rohoncz Coll. Hungary

THE GUITAR LESSON *By Gerard Ter Borch* (1617-1681)

Original $24\frac{1}{4}'' \times 18\frac{3}{4}''$

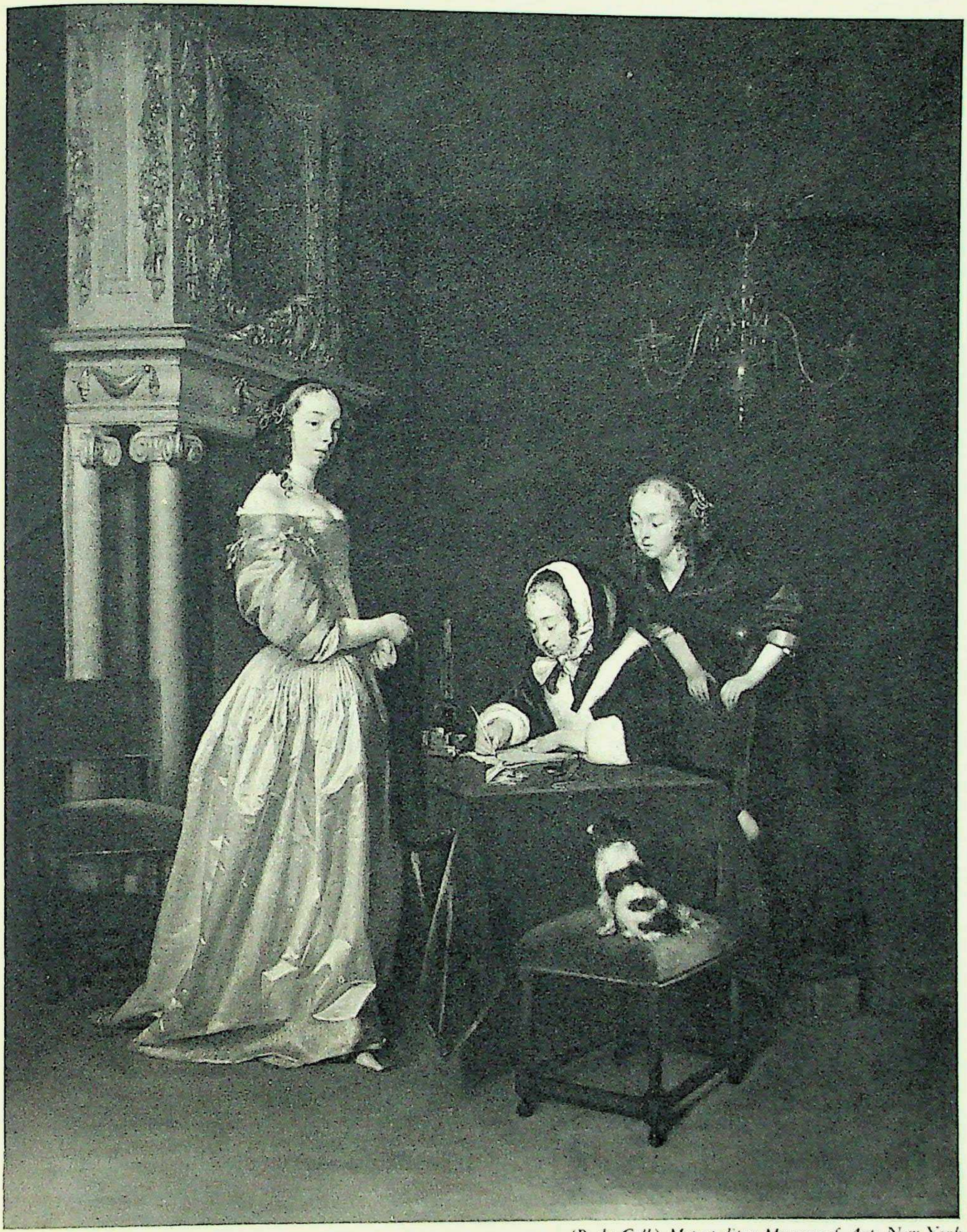

Plate 17

(Bache Coll.) Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

CURIOSITY *By Gerard Ter Borch*

Original 29″ × 23½″

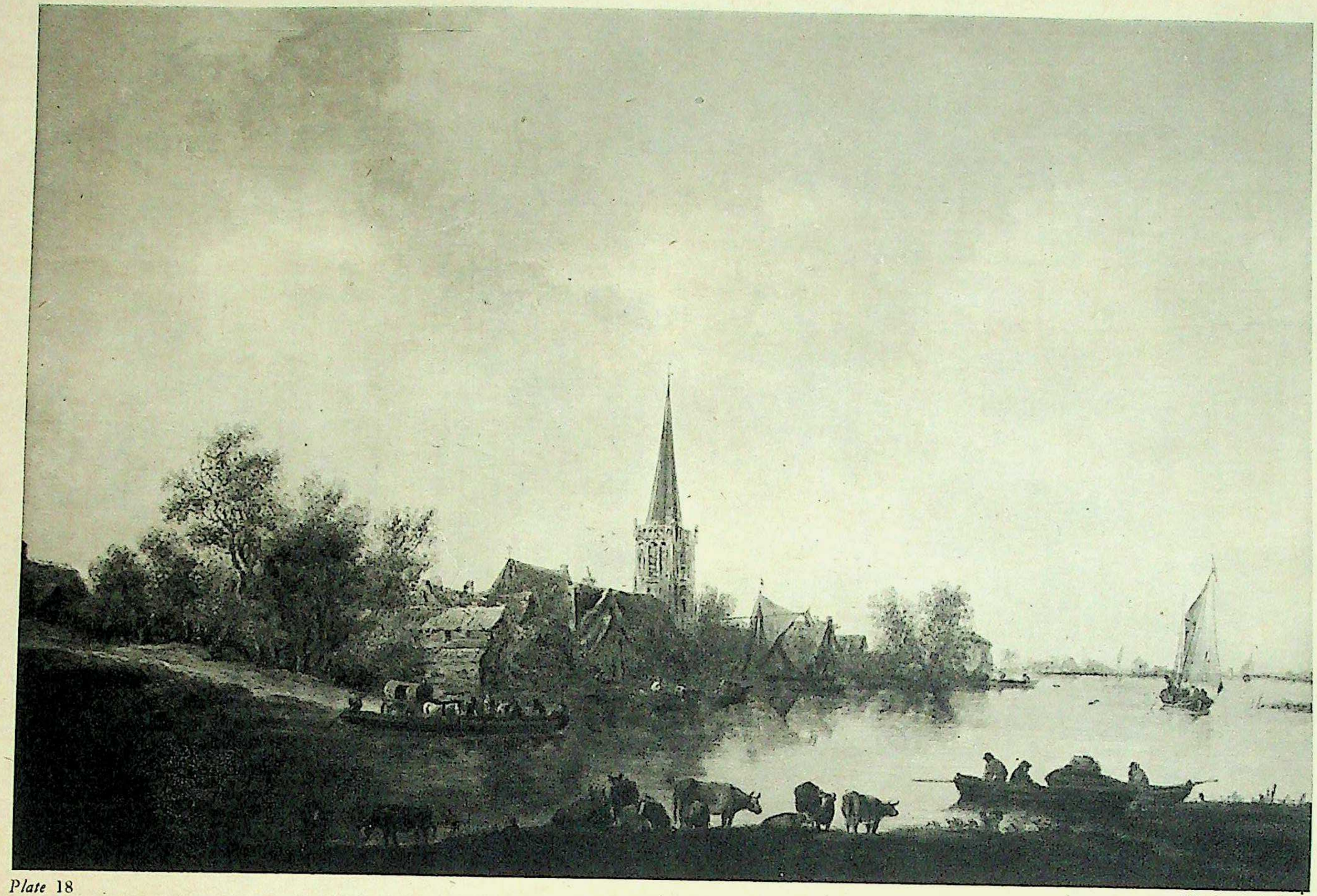

Plate 18

National Gallery

A RIVER SCENE *By Jan Josefz van Goyen* (1596-1656)

Original 25½″ × 37″

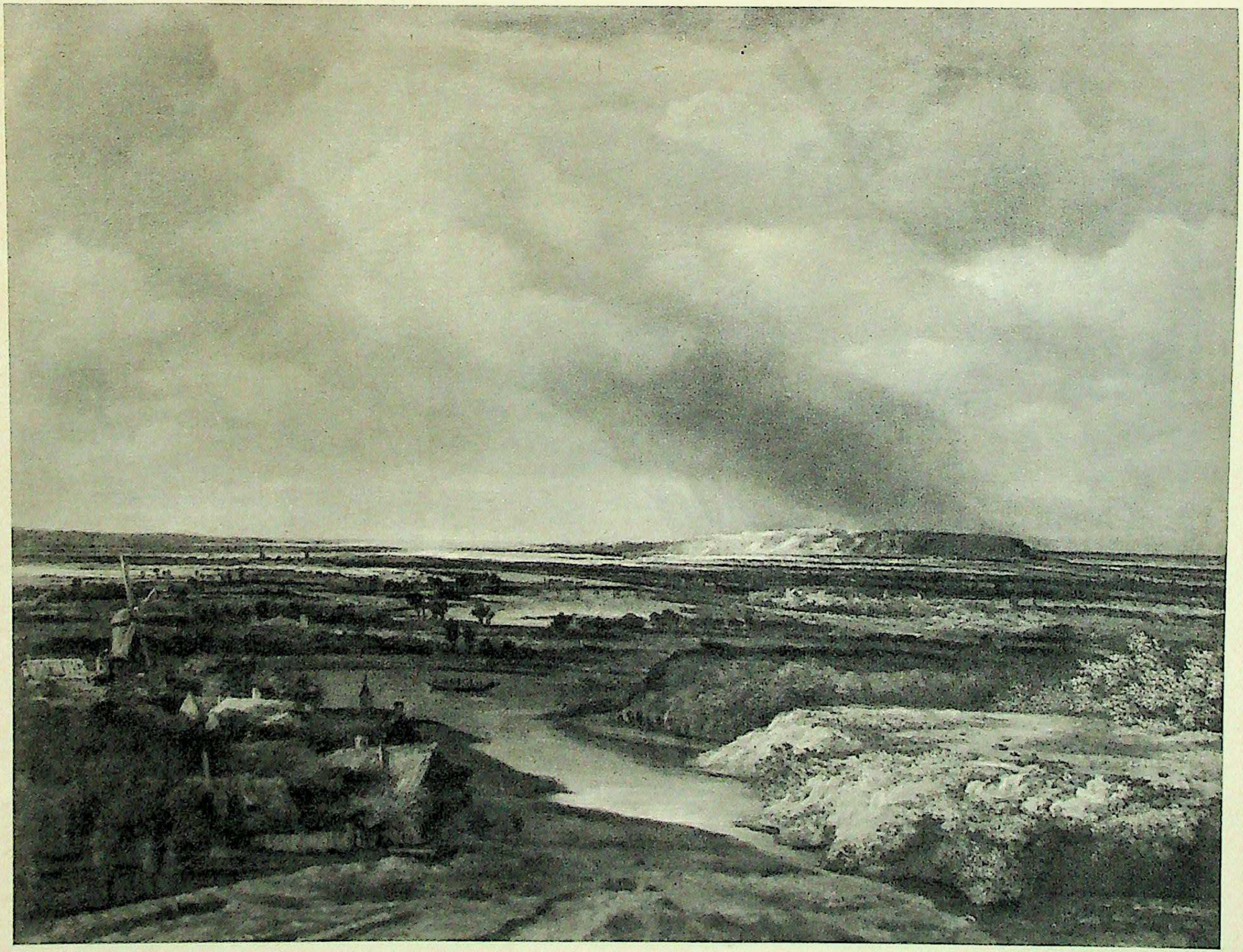

Plate 19

The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres

BEGINNING OF A STORM *By Philips Koninck* (1619-1688)

Original 51½″ × 65½″

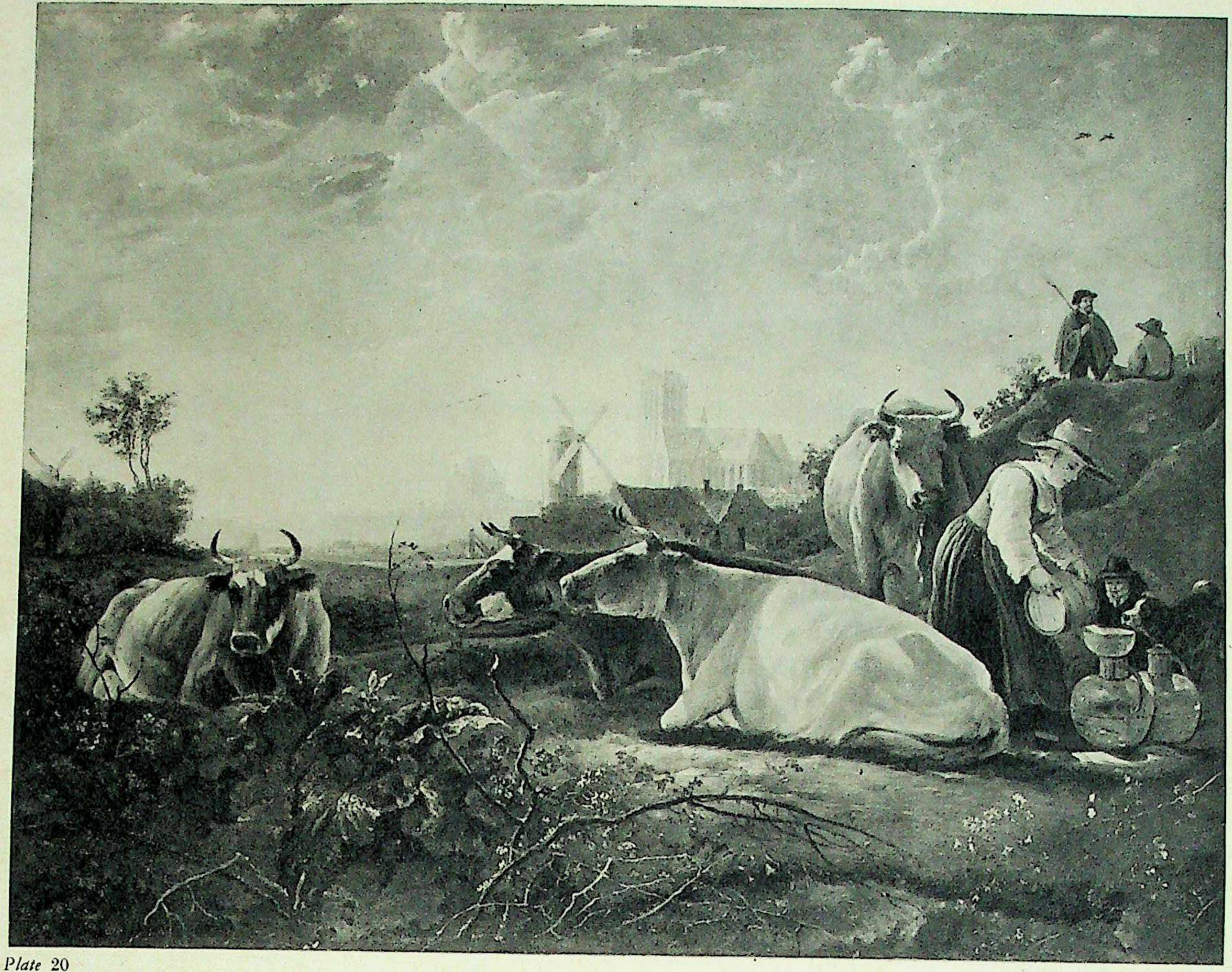

Plate 20

National Gallery

THE LARGE DORT *By Aelbert Cuyp* (1620-1691)

Original 62″ × 78″